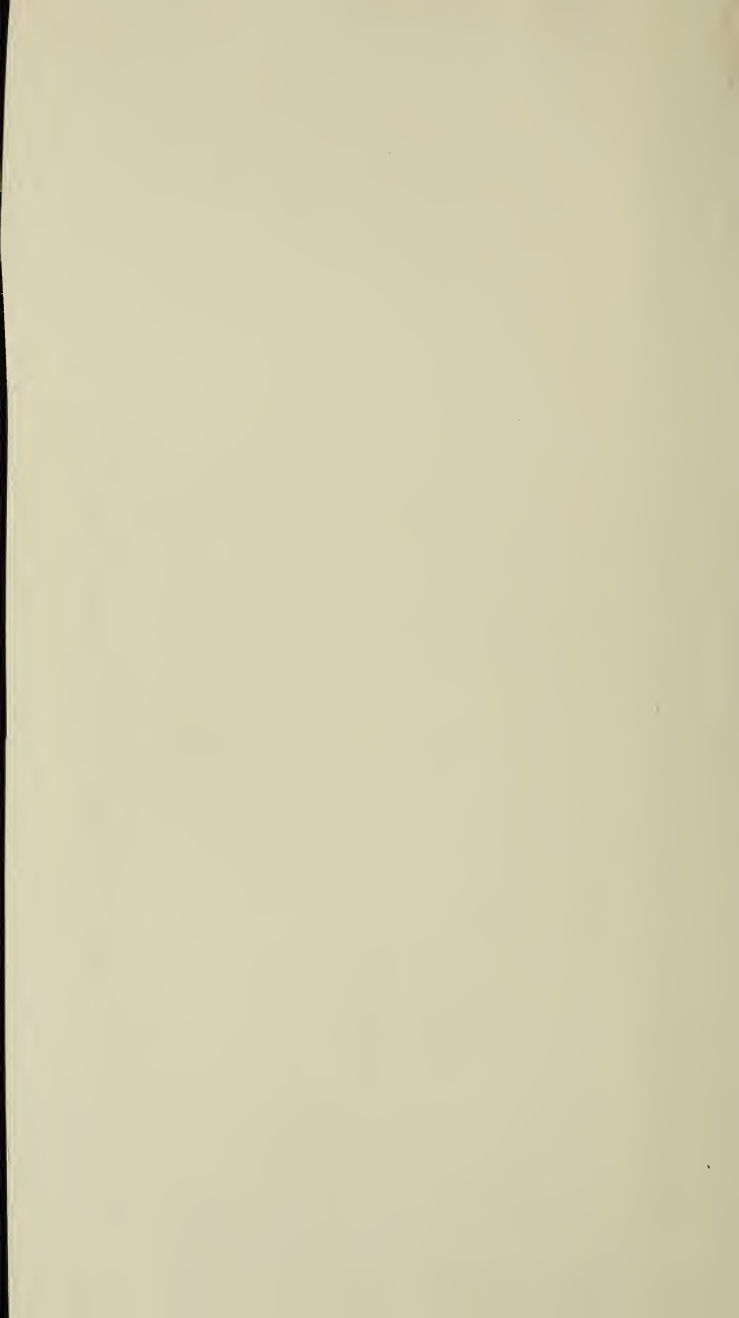


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LIFE AND DIARY

OF THE

REV. JOHN HENRY GARDNER.

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EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY M. AITKEN, 1, ST JAMES'S SQUARE.



J. H. Gardner

BORN SEP. 11. 1807—DIED APRIL 10. 1832.

ENGRAVED BY J. JOHNSTONE FROM A MINIATURE BY M^{RS} GILLESPIE

LIFE AND DIARY
OF THE
REV. JOHN HENRY GARDNER,
WHITHORN.

BY
DONALD FRASER, D.D.
KENNOWAY,

AUTHOR OF THE LIFE AND DIARY OF THE REV. EBENEZER AND
THE REV. RALPH ERSKINE, &c.

EDINBURGH :

PUBLISHED BY M. PATERSON, 12, UNION PLACE;
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON; AND W. CURRY, JUN.
AND CO., DUBLIN.

1836.

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TO THE
UNITED ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION
OF WHITHORN,
THIS MEMORIAL OF AN AMIABLE PASTOR,
OF WHOSE SHORT BUT INTERESTING
CAREER THEY RETAIN AN AFFECTIONATE
REMEMBRANCE,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

IN selecting the subjects, as well as regulating the details of Christian Biography, a prudent discrimination is justly expected. Whilst undue prominence, however, is sometimes injudiciously allotted to characters comparatively very ordinary and uninteresting, departed individuals whose real and acknowledged worth seems calculated to render their memorials signally, or somewhat considerably, subservient to the advancement of piety, ought not to be utterly neglected.

The ministers of the Secession Church have not been altogether overlooked in the biographical writings of the present age. A favourable reception has been given to memorials, not only of the founders of that numerous body, the WILSONS and the ERSKINES, but also to their excellent successors, as the *Browns* and the *Waugh's*. Nor is it merely those pious servants of Christ that have been spared to accomplish a lengthened course of honourable and useful service in the Church on earth, whose claims to this notice are cheerfully recognised. The remains of hopeful pastors whose "sun has gone down at noon," and whose piety and talents had just begun to diffuse a

delightful fragrance, when, in the inscrutable providence of God, they were cut down like the tender flower by the vehement blast, have been perused by many with peculiar pleasure and advantage. If the memory of an ALEXANDER WAUGH, Jun., a JAMES GRAY, an ALEXANDER MARSHALL, a ROBERT BROWN, an ALEXANDER FISHER, a WILLIAM LOURIE, an ALEXANDER NISBET, and some other young ministers deceased, of whom more or less ample accounts have appeared, be dear to the United Secession Church, none who knew the lovely youth will deem it presumptuous to add to this list the name of JOHN HENRY GARDNER.

The writer of the following pages possesses, in one respect, advantages decidedly superior to those that fell to the share of most of his brethren, the biographers of the worthy young clergymen just referred to. He alludes to facilities for describing his nephew's character, and narrating his history, mental as well as external, furnished by a collection of materials uncommonly extensive. Not merely from a great number of letters addressed to relatives and other correspondents, but from a copious Diary written by himself in short-hand characters, of the existence of which he was totally ignorant till after his lamented decease, he has been enabled to state many interesting particulars regarding him which otherwise could not have

been learned. The numerous extracts from his Diary, the design and occasion of which are adverted to in pages twentieth and twenty-first, will be found peculiarly valuable.

To tell the truth, it was originally intended that this volume should consist partly of a memoir, and partly of a few lectures and sermons selected from a large store of excellent discourses found among his manuscripts. Several esteemed friends, however, who had favourable opportunities for examining the matter, ultimately adopted the opinion, that since a volume of the size and price contemplated was necessary for the Life and Diary alone, it would be proper, meantime at least, to suffer all the other fruits of his pen, how well-written and instructive soever, to remain asleep in their repository, that justice might be done to the simple exhibition of his sentiments, and the warm effusions of his heart, which his epistolary communications, and in particular the memoranda of his journal, supply. The latter, at any rate, will be regarded by the Christian public as a greater rarity than the former; and possibly not a few may see cause, on perusing it, to consider his Diary capable of standing a comparison, in respect at once to expression and to deep-toned evangelical piety, with the greater proportion of the writings of the same description that have secured the most marked esteem among the friends of vital religion.

How gratifying soever this publication may be to the feelings of surviving relatives in one view, it serves to try them not a little in another ; and they greatly deceive themselves if it is not their principal aim to promote the cause of the Redeemer, and to employ a likely means which Divine Providence has put within their reach, and for which they are responsible, of prolonging in some measure the usefulness of a promising youth, whose ministerial career proved (such was the will of Heaven !) exceedingly short.

To the teacher of children, the student in divinity, the new licentiate, and the young minister of the gospel, this little work, it is humbly expected, from the pattern it exhibits, and the practical hints it suggests, will be particularly useful. In memoirs of clergymen the space that intervenes betwixt their receiving license to preach the gospel and their ordination to the ministry, is usually regarded as almost entirely void of interest, and consequently passed over in a very cursory manner. A different method, however, has been adopted with respect to the minister who forms the subject of these sheets. Owing to the combined operation of the sufficient time that he remained a *probationer*, the great variety of towns and districts where he was appointed to officiate, his zeal and activity in improving the diversified opportunities of doing good that presented themselves in the places where he sojourn-

ed, and the accuracy with which he recorded the more memorable circumstances that occurred, the transactions of this period of his life will be found highly pleasing and instructive.

Private Christians, it is hoped, will experience this "Life and Diary" to be conducive to their spiritual benefit. To the members of his own congregation who were "willing for a season to rejoice in his light,"—to all that knew him, or had occasionally enjoyed his ministrations—to not a few who never heard his voice or saw his face in the flesh—and, in particular, to ingenuous youths, whatever be the occupations they respectively pursue, it seems calculated, by concurring influence from above, to administer seasonable instruction, excitement, and encouragement. It will serve not only to gratify the curiosity, but also to promote the edification of the reader, to see the notices it comprises of many individuals partly connected with the United Secession Church, as the late MR BROWN of Whitburn, and DR DICK of Glasgow; and partly belonging to other denominations, as the late MR ROWATT of Whithorn. The information it communicates respecting both Mr Gardner's own feelings and conduct, and the temper and behaviour of other young men with whom he associated, is well fitted to confirm the conviction that there is a *reality* in religion; that godly and faithful labourers

are still sent forth into the vineyard by its sovereign and gracious Lord ; and that “ a seed shall serve him ” from age to age, till the last trumpet shall sound to summon the quick and the dead to the tribunal of judgment. A large proportion of the details immediately bearing on religious experience are by no means adapted exclusively to persons invested with a public character, but come home to “ the business and bosom ” of every lover of the Saviour, and furnish a variety of important remarks relative to Christian principle and practice.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that, conformably to the prevailing temper of its subject, the author has written this narrative in a conciliatory spirit, and that the various extracts it contains exhibit nothing which can justly prove repulsive to Christian ministers or people of any denomination.

Is the question, after all, asked, Why should the account of a minister, whose mortal course was so circumscribed, and who comparatively attracted so little attention in the church or the world, be so minute and so extended ? The compiler can merely reply, that upon examining the numerous materials laid to his hand, they appeared to him so valuable, that he could not, consistently with duty, have abridged them to a much greater extent. In adjusting the detail, he has been governed by a regard to the moral and spiritual ten-

dency of the occurrences and expressions introduced. If in any instance he has given place to insignificant particulars to a degree exceeding what was requisite to render the more important materials intelligible and impressive, he has only to solicit the candid indulgence of his readers, which he trusts will not be withheld. He is quite aware that his near relation to John Henry Gardner, and the fatherly affection with which he always regarded him, while they have supplied certain facilities in composing this account, have also carried along with them some disadvantages, for which the considerate and benevolent will be disposed to make allowance.

It is no small happiness, in his estimation, that the book consists, in a much greater proportion, of extracts from others, and especially from the journal and the letters of his nephew, than of paragraphs written by himself. His province has demanded little else than to select and arrange ; and he can positively assure his readers, that being familiarly acquainted with the mode of stenography practised by his lamented relative, he has here maintained the same strict fidelity in quotation exemplified in his former attempts in biography. The memoranda of the Diary, though often hastily written, are characterised by great general correctness ; and he has almost invariably judged it better to leave every sentence to appear exactly as

it was originally written, though the selection or collocation of the words might occasionally admit of a slight improvement, than to hazard the least alteration. Wherever terms or sentences are omitted, care is taken to prevent the sense and tenor of the record from undergoing any change.

That the traces of human imperfection, which are no doubt discernible in this publication, may not materially impair its utility ; and that, by the blessing of God, it may conduce in some measure to the high object, which he believes to be sincerely desired by individuals still more nearly related than the compiler to the excellent youth whose memory it embalms, is the earnest wish of

D. F.

KENNOWAY, *April* 1836.

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LIFE AND DIARY

OF THE

REV. JOHN HENRY GARDNER.

PERIOD I.

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS ENTRANCE ON THE STUDY OF
DIVINITY.

JOHN HENRY GARDNER was born at Newtonards, county of Down, Ireland, on Friday the 11th September 1807. His parents, the REV. JAMES GARDNER and MAGDALENE FRASER, were both natives of Scotland. His father was born at Halcraig, Airdrie, Nov. 17, 1774, being the only surviving son of JOHN GARDNER, builder, who died towards the close of the year 1807, and MARY ALLAN, who followed her husband to the grave February 20, 1829, at the very advanced age of more than ninety years. Mary discovered a pious disposition, combined with considerable powers of judgment and memory. We never saw a female more minutely acquainted with the early history of the Secession Church, of which she and her husband were members, or more capable of relating, with accuracy and spirit, instructive and entertaining anecdotes regarding its ministers.

Their son JAMES having studied languages and philosophy at the University of Glasgow, and theology under the tuition of the late learned and REV. ARCHIBALD BRUCE of Whitburn, Professor to the General Associate Synod, was licensed to preach the gospel; and after creditably serving the Church for a few years in the capacity of a licentiate, accepted a call from a congregation at Newtonards, under the inspection of the sister synod in Ireland, where he was ordained about the end of October 1801. On Monday, the 26th April 1802, he married MAGDALENE, the third daughter of the late REV. JOHN FRASER, Auchtermuchty, and MAGDALENE ERSKINE, grand-daughter of the REV. RALPH ERSKINE, Dunfermline.

Mr Gardner endeared himself to his congregation alike by his public and private ministrations, and his character rose progressively in general estimation. Yet it pleased that God, whose ways are "past finding out," to visit him with a distemper, of which he died on the 21st January 1812, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and the eleventh of his ministry. It will gratify the surviving relatives and acquaintance of this pious and amiable minister, to see the following brief notice of his death and character, supposed to have been written by one of his co-presbyters, which appeared in the *Belfast News-Letter* shortly after his decease:—

“Died, on Tuesday the 21st of January, the REV. JAMES GARDNER, minister of Newtonards, after an illness which he bore with exemplary patience. He was a sincere friend, an affectionate husband, and

an indulgent father. As a preacher of the Gospel, he was lively, pathetic, impressive, and much esteemed by his own congregation, and by others. His benevolent and kind offices to all his acquaintances of different denominations, were only limited by his abilities to do good. He has left a disconsolate widow, and three helpless children, to lament his premature death in the midst of his days."

JOHN HENRY was the youngest of the bereaved family; but though little more than four years and four months old when he sustained this heavy loss, he seems to have cherished through life a most affectionate veneration for the memory of his excellent father, and to have kept in perpetual remembrance some of the pious lessons he had taught him in his childhood. His private memoranda contain a variety of tender allusions to a departed parent, of which we present the following specimens:—

"*May 22, 1825.*—Mr Shaw of Whitburn preached in his own meeting-house for the Whitburn Sabbath School. His text was in the end of the Romans, 'Who also were in Christ before me.' Mr S., in addressing parents, reminded them that their prayers might be answered to their children after they were in their graves. This affected me considerably, from the circumstance that it was one of the last things my dear father said to me, 'Pray for your father; your father prays for you.' God of my father, pour thy Spirit on his seed, and thy blessing on his offspring.

"*Jan. 21, 1826.*—It is fourteen years this day since my dear sisters and myself became fatherless,

and our mother a widow. As for our dearest earthly friend, who was then removed from our sight, we have good reason to hope that all is well with him ; and as for those of ourselves who still remain in the vale of tears, we have a better, an everlasting friend, into whose benevolent bosom we can pour our bitterest complaints, and on whose arm we can depend for support and protection in the hour of weakness, and the season of danger."

Having lost her beloved husband, as well as two dear boys, JOHN and JAMES, being the eldest and the youngest of her family, whose remains were committed to the dust before him, it now belonged to Mrs Gardner to come to a decision respecting the place of her future residence. Her continuance at Newtonards would have highly gratified the feelings of many warm friends in her husband's congregation, and of other denominations in that vicinity, who kindly proposed schemes by which she might have, at the same time, provided for her family and promoted the public good. Attachment to her native country, however, and the pressing invitations of her relatives—in particular the affectionate entreaties of her father, who most tenderly sympathized with his daughter and grandchildren under their great bereavement—induced her respectfully to decline the benevolent proposals of Irish wellwishers, and to bid them a solemn and affectionate adieu. About three months after Mr Gardner's death, she returned to Scotland, and, after some interval, took up house at Auchtermuchty, where she met with much counte-

nance and encouragement from a considerable circle of early and attached friends, while she enjoyed the presence and assistance of her father, till it pleased God, in December 1818, to remove him to eternity.

The right education of her children was a matter she had deeply at heart. Her son's aptitude for learning, and the religious impressions he early discovered, led her, in particular, to make every exertion for his instruction in the first principles of literature as well as Christianity. Having gone to the parochial school in spring 1813, he continued to attend it for about seven years, during the first six of which it was taught by Mr William Gay, and the last by Mr Archibald Dickson, now a licentiate in the Church of Scotland. Encouraged by his capacity and diligence, both these teachers treated him with marked attention ; and under their tuition he made considerable proficiency, not only in the English and Latin languages, but also in the Greek and the French. His own grandfather, while he remained alive, watched his progress with delight ; and after his death, his education was very kindly superintended by the Rev. Archibald Baird of Paisley, pastor, at that period, of the First Congregation of the United Secession, Auchtermuchty. To this talented minister, he for some time, almost every morning, read lessons in Livy, Homer, and other ancient authors ; while, at least every Sabbath evening, he and his sisters received instruction in the doctrines of the Bible.

Shortly after he had finished the thirteenth year of his age, John Henry entered the University of Edinburgh, where, during the session commencing No-

vember 1820, and the two following sessions, he studied Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, several branches of Mathematics, Logic, and Moral Philosophy. In the year 1822, he also for some time attended an Elocution class, which eventually proved of no small advantage to him as a public speaker. Various letters addressed to relatives, during the course of his academical studies, serve to manifest the zeal and assiduity with which he improved his opportunities of acquiring valuable knowledge. In a letter to his mother, for instance, he says:—"I do not think I told you that I got back my Essay from Dr Ritchie, with the following words at the end of it, 'This is an excellent Essay—the author has given a luminous view of his subject in clear and perspicuous language. D. R.'" Writing to an uncle, too, in February 1823, he makes the following statement:—"MR WILSON is lecturing at present on the benevolent affections, which he makes two; love and sympathy. Part of my Essay on *Touch* and *Sight* was read on Saturday. It was received much better than I expected. I am writing another on that part of our moral nature called the moral sense or conscience. At the Hebrew class we are reading the Psalms. We have already finished the 1st, 2d, 3d, 8th, and 15th; and the 16th is the lesson for to-day."

His extreme modesty, to say the truth, prevented him from making so conspicuous a figure at the University as his talents might have enabled him to do; and those who happened to be the most intimately acquainted with him, never failed to entertain the most favourable ideas of his scholarship. The testi-

monials he received from two gentlemen that knew him well, on the occasion of his applying for a situation as a teacher of youth, are much to his credit. Mr Baird, his esteemed minister mentioned above, bears testimony, in decided terms, to "his amiable dispositions, promising abilities, studious habits, progress in different departments of study, and to the eminent prudence and piety he had long discovered."

The following is an exact copy of the certificate granted him at the same time by Mr Dickson, his highly respectable teacher :—

"AUCHTERMUCHTY, 21st February 1822.

"I hereby certify that MR JOHN HENRY GARDNER has attended the parochial school of this place, as a pupil of mine, for the last two years, with the exception of last session's attendance at College, and that part of the present one which has already expired. That, previous to his becoming a scholar of mine, he had read Latin for nearly five years and Greek upwards of one ; and that having had the advantage of a good master, and being himself possessed of more than ordinary ability, and formed to studious habits, he had acquired a knowledge of these languages much beyond what is generally attained at a country school. During the time he was a scholar of mine, he read the whole of Horace and part of Cicero, together with Mair's Introduction, and the whole of the *Collectanea Minora*, part of Homer, together with Professor Dunbar's Greek Exercises. Having turned his attention to Geography and French, he acquired such a knowledge of the latter as

to be able, at the time of his leaving me, to translate that language, *ad aperturum libri*, with the greatest ease and accuracy. Latterly he went through a course of Mathematics and the elementary part of Algebra, in which his progress was fully equal to that which he had made in his other studies.

“In one word, he is without exception one of the best scholars I have ever met with ; and I am sure that every one of the ministers who attended the annual examination of my school, would, if called upon, be happy to bear testimony to the intimate acquaintance which he displayed on these occasions, in regard to his knowledge of the English language, and Greek and Latin in particular. In these he made such proficiency, that, on his going to College, he entered the second class for both ; and, from what I understand, acquitted himself much to the satisfaction of his professors.

He is, besides, a young man of the most amiable dispositions, and has been trained up to the practice of the best religious principles. His manners are mild and unassuming, and his modesty not unfrequently prevents him from exhibiting the acquirements and talents he possesses. In every point of view, he is eminently well qualified for becoming a teacher of youth ; and from my intimate knowledge of his character and attainments as a scholar, it gives me the greatest pleasure, conscientiously and undisguisedly, to bear this public testimony in his favour.

(Signed) “ARCHIBALD DICKSON.”

The bodily constitution of this promising youth was

far from robust, and it sustained some injuries in his boyhood, from the effects of which he never fully recovered. The excessive fatigue he endured in a summer evening's excursion, with a number of his schoolmates, had almost proved fatal to his eyesight. To this misfortune he alludes in the following terms, in a letter regarding the state of his health, addressed to a medical man in the year 1830 :—" In my tenth year I was seized with blindness in both eyes, without any change in the external appearance of the organ, but accompanied with a heavy painful sensation in the forehead, sometimes in the eyes themselves. The sight of one eye returned through the use of the means prescribed ; but that of the other is, to this day, so imperfect that I cannot with it alone read the largest ordinary type. The head-ach has sometimes returned after much exertion, and when I was affected with cold, but not nearly, for the most part, with equal severity." To this defect in his eyesight was unhappily added a similar deficiency in hearing, occasioned by a violent and dangerous illness that seized him about the middle of his first session at College. The letter of 1830, in which he describes the former infirmity, contains also the following allusion to the latter :—" Ever since my recovery from a fever in 1821, my hearing has been impeded on the same side where my vision is imperfect."

These, and other early afflictions, were not unheeded or unimproved by this young man. His minister and his teacher had good cause to bear testimony to the devout inclinations, as well as the literary

spirit, he discovered in youth. Scarcely had his mental faculties begun to open, when he showed a marked attention to sacred things. He could read the New Testament at the age of four years. Even before he was capable of reading, as often happens indeed with lively children, he learned a number of psalms and hymns. Owing partly to the circumstance that he had opportunities of hearing his sisters repeat the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism to their father, he was found to have committed to memory two pages of that valuable summary, ere his parents were aware that he was master of a single question. He very early adopted, and steadily pursued the practice of reading a portion of the Holy Scriptures every morning and evening. It was observed, that what he read in the Bible and in religious books seemed occasionally to make a powerful impression on his mind. In 1812, when his mother with her children, shortly after their removal to Scotland, was spending a few weeks at a friend's house in the country, several miles distant from the place of public worship, she directed them, one Sabbath, before taking leave to go herself to church, to keep their room and attend to their books ; and at her return, towards evening, she was truly delighted, when her dear boy, perceiving her approach, hastened to salute her with a detail of their proceedings in her absence ; and, among other things, said, " We went about family worship, and Magdalene prayed." At an early period he began himself to conduct the devotional exercises of his mother's house ; and even his first prayers were characterised by unaffected seriousness, united with propriety and

fluency of expression. From his infancy he had numerous questions on religious topics to ask. With great apparent conscientiousness he inquired particularly into the difference between right and wrong, and endeavoured accurately and clearly to distinguish betwixt what he ought to do and what he ought to avoid. Actuated by the same feelings, he was careful and decided in the choice of his companions, strictly shunning the society of foolish and naughty boys, and associating with the considerate and virtuous.

Whilst every week-day found him going cheerfully to school, and profiting by its various exercises, he repaired to the sanctuary with similar alacrity on each returning Sabbath, and approved himself an attentive and interested hearer of the Gospel. He distinctly recollected the leading thoughts in the discourses he heard, and anxiously cherished the good impressions they were fitted to make upon his heart. During the period of his attending College, he enjoyed the advantage of the ministry partly of Dr Peddie and partly of Dr Brown. As a specimen of his solicitude to mingle a persevering attention to religion with his literary engagements, we may quote the following extract from a letter to an uncle, dated Edinburgh, January 7, 1822 :—" Dr Peddie preached, last Sabbath, on these words, ' Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations,' Psalm xc. 1. He first remarked that there were three things of a general nature suggested by Moses in these words. 1st, They are true only with regard to saints. 2dly, They go upon the supposition that, in every age of

the world, God reserves a seed to serve him. 3dly, Moses evidently believed that God would be to his people, in that and future generations, all that he had been to them in those that were past. He then more particularly considered the import of the words. A *dwelling-place* implies a fixed abode, a place of safety, and a place of comfort. Oh that, in whatever circumstances we may be placed, we could commit ourselves to the care of our heavenly Father, who never ceases to care for his people !”

The impressive admonitions of Providence, by painful bereavements no less than personal ailments, concurred with the lessons of Scripture and the faithful preaching of the Word, to elevate his mind to God and everlasting objects. Having lost his dear father in 1812, and his maternal grandfather in 1818, he was also bereaved, in 1821, of MAGDALENE, the elder of his two beloved sisters, a very thoughtful and very pleasant girl, who was taken away by a severe distemper on the 5th of August, nearly two months after having completed her sixteenth year. In a letter to a relative, written a few days before his amiable sister's decease, he gives an affecting account of her sufferings, and concludes with the following reflections :—“ All this is well calculated to remind us of the frailty of our nature ; and it would be well for us if we endeavoured to improve by such warnings, and in the time of health to prepare for the day of affliction and of death. And may we be resigned to the will of our heavenly Father, who does all things well, and cast all our cares upon Him for time and for eternity.”

He partook of the Lord's Supper, for the first time, on occasion of the administration of that blessed ordinance to the congregation in which his grandfather had officiated as pastor for nearly half a century, on Sabbath the 12th August, before he had completed his fourteenth year. Whether the mortal illness of his dear sister, which terminated in her dissolution the Sabbath immediately preceding, had any special influence on his mind in determining him at that time to make a public profession of his faith in a crucified Redeemer, and his resolution to devote himself wholly to his service, we cannot positively affirm. We know, however, that in taking this important step he had the advantage of the instructions and counsels of the Rev. Mr Baird ; and we hope that he acted under the guidance of the great Master of the feast. None, whether old or young, should venture to approach the Lord's Table till they have become savingly acquainted with themselves and their Redeemer. But while many sinfully postpone a voluntary and public profession of attachment to Christ, the conduct of those young Christians who feel constrained by his love promptly to take part in the sacramental commemoration of his death, cannot be unacceptable to him who says, " I remember thee the kindness of thy youth ;"—" Those that seek me early shall find me."

With much pleasure we record the following memorandum of solemn self-dedication, which was written at Glasgow on his birthday, during the first session of his attendance at the Divinity Hall, and fully two years after his first approach to the com-

munion table. It was found in his own short-hand writing on a small piece of paper :—

“ Having this day completed my sixteenth year, and reflecting on all the goodness of God hitherto, especially with regard to the interests of my soul, and on my shameful ingratitude to God for his kindness, especially my coldness and want of love towards my Saviour, I desire at this time humbly to confess my sins, thank God for his mercies, and, above all, lay myself down at the foot of the cross, there to receive the pardon of my sins, the cleansing of my heart and life, and a title to the eternal inheritance, all through the meritorious obedience and satisfactory death of my dear Redeemer, to whom I desire to owe all that I need for time and eternity ; and to whom, with the Father and blessed Spirit, be all might, and dominion, and power, and honour, and glory, and blessing, now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen. Lord, I believe ; help mine unbelief !

“ As a student of divinity also, I would desire to put my whole trust in the Lord my righteousness and strength, and to undertake this work, as well as all other things, in the name of my great Master, who is able to make his grace sufficient for me, and to perfect his strength in my weakness. I must fail if I trust in my own strength ; but I confide in thy promise, O thou Saviour of sinners, thou Father of the fatherless, thou *Shaddai*, all-sufficient !

“ JOHN HENRY GARDNER.

“ This 11th day of Sept. 1823.”

The Christian ministry was not merely a profes-

sion to which his attention was directed by the voice of relatives and friends, but the object of his own cordial choice. The views by which he was actuated, at the very commencement of theological study, are manifest from the paper just copied, and from a variety of letters written at that period. One of these, dated July 14, 1823, is addressed to his surviving sister :—" I was at *Lanark*," says he, " on Tuesday last week, was examined before a Presbytery of three ministers and as many elders, and admitted to the Hall. I have got for my text, ' Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' 1 Tim. i. 15. Oh, it is a faithful saying! Oh, it is worthy of all acceptance! May you and I feel its force on our hearts. Now, my dear sister, I beseech you to think seriously of the difficult but glorious work in which I have embarked. Cease not to make mention of me in your prayers, that Emmanuel's grace may be sufficient for me, and his strength perfected in my weakness." In a letter to a cousin, he expresses himself as follows :—" I do, I trust, see the necessity of a vigorous pursuit of intellectual improvement; but this is not to students, any more than to any one else, *the one thing needful*. Nay, if religion be necessary to any man, surely it is doubly so to the student in divinity. I earnestly request, therefore, that you will use every means in your power, by supplicating the mercy-seat, and by epistolary conversation, to endeavour to promote my advancement in *real* religion. Without this all-important qualification, how can the minister of the Gospel set himself in earnest to advance the glory of the Redeemer, or save the souls of men? It is my most ardent desire that, if I

should be allowed to deliver from the pulpit the faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, I may be able to say, in my heart at least, with the apostle Paul, that this is the anchor of my own soul—that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*”

The reader will observe, that in the letter to his sister just quoted, he states that he was admitted to the study of divinity by a Presbytery that met at Lanark. His being examined and admitted by that Presbytery, it should be noted, was owing to the circumstance that, in summer 1823, he removed from his mother's house, Auchtermuchty, within the bounds of the United Associate Presbytery of Cupar, to a village included in the district superintended by the Presbytery of Lanark, where he then began to occupy a school. His first attempt in public teaching was made in autumn 1822, when for a few weeks he supplied the place of a young relative at *Houston*, in the parish of Uphall. The following summer he proposed himself a candidate for one of the four schools endowed by the late MR JAMES WILSON, merchant in Whitburn. Having presented his certificates, and been examined, along with about six other candidates, May 20, 1823, by several clergymen in the presence of the trustees, he was chosen teacher of the school at *Foldhouse*, in the parish of Whitburn. Here he commenced his labours at the beginning of the succeeding month; and with the exception of the period annually allowed him for attendance on the Divinity Class, continued faithfully to discharge his duty for the space of three years.

PERIOD II.

FROM HIS ENTRANCE ON THE STUDY OF DIVINITY TO THE
CLOSE OF HIS CURRICULUM OF FIVE SESSIONS.

No part of Mr Gardner's life, very possibly, was happier than that which intervened betwixt his entrance on theological studies, and the time of his receiving license to preach the everlasting Gospel; and this remark seems particularly applicable to the years of his residence in the parish of Whitburn. From various communications to relatives, it appears that he was thoroughly satisfied with his lot, and knew how to estimate the advantages arising from the ministry and friendship of the REV. JOHN BROWN, the kindness of other pious persons around him, and from the opportunities for study and devotion afforded by a local situation peculiarly rural and sequestered. The following extracts will serve to confirm this statement.

In a letter to an uncle, "dated Glasgow, September 1823," he thus expresses himself:—"I gave up the school on the 22d August. The number of scholars was forty. I have, since I came, experienced the greatest kindness from Mr Brown and other gentlemen, and have as yet, so far as I know, agreed with the people. I am to re-open the school as soon as the harvest at Foldhouse is over. Mr Brown has several students under his care, whom he is to meet with, now and then, for the purpose of religious

conversation and worship." A subsequent epistle, of date "Foldhouse, February 1824," contains the following passage:—"You have doubtless heard how much my school has increased during winter. I have on my list sixty-six names, all of whom still attend except four. I am busily engaged in school from ten to three o'clock. This I think rather much labour for me; yet I could scarce, I fear, abridge it, without giving great offence. Mr Brown continues exceedingly attentive and kind to me. He has had two meetings of students since my return, at which we were examined on the Scriptures, and on the being and perfections of God. Five, perhaps six of us, intend to form a society, as soon as possible. I attend a fellowship meeting near this, of which my worthy and kind friend, MR WADDELL of Crofthead, is a member. I desire to be grateful for so many opportunities of increasing in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour." In a letter to his mother, he says to the same effect:—"I have found Mr Waddell and Mr Brown just as I expected. Mr W. is, as Mr Brown described him, uncommon for knowledge and piety. As an example of Mr Brown's kindness, take the following. He said to me several times, 'I'll be a father to you, as far as I can.' One of his good advices, when speaking of studying for the ministry was, 'Look up for the unction of the Holy One.'" Another letter addressed to a relative, a considerable time after, contains the following statement:—"In Mr Brown's friendship and counsel I am very happy. Often he takes me to his study, and prays with me."

Mr Brown himself, in a short letter to the subject of this memoir, written probably in 1823, gives him advice and encouragement in the most endearing terms:—"I hope you will continue to try to impress upon the children the important matters of their salvation. God has dwelt long in the family from whom you are descended; this you will find a strong obligation on you to do as much as possible for his cause.—My dear friend, yours, J. BROWN." A letter of a subsequent date is couched in similar expressions:—"My dear young friend, I am glad you are well. I hope you will have much improvement under the prelections of DR DICK. You have, I think, early known the Redeemer. This will lead you to study divinity *as a Christian*, and to have your own soul fed with the truth. Do all the good you can in society, and among the younger students."

John Henry's private memoranda, no less than his letters, abound with allusions to the very kind and beneficial attentions he and his fellow-students in that vicinity experienced from Mr Brown, of which we present the following specimens, written at different dates:—"Attended a meeting of students in Mr Brown's. We were examined on predestination, creation, and providence. Mr Brown gave us advice respecting our reading, our prayers, our companions, our scholars, &c. I read my critical exercise before the society; Mr N. also read his."—"Mr Brown visited this neighbourhood to-day. How unwearied is my aged friend in the discharge of his ministerial duty! How devoted to the glory of his Master, and the immortal benefit of precious souls!"

—" Mr Brown examined the students on the person and offices of our blessed Redeemer."—" Mr Brown and I— have gone to Inverkeithing sacrament. Mr B. left a note for me, dated Thursday, which I received yesterday, reminding me that it is the duty of Christians to remember one another in prayer, especially when the Lord's Supper is dispensed any where. I hope I shall not overlook this important and agreeable duty."

Having thus alluded to a *Diary* written by the subject of this narrative, we may state that it was begun in his seventeenth year, and kept up, with less or more regularity, almost to the day of his death. It seems proper also to cite a few sentences from its first entry, from which it appears that a pure sense of duty impelled him to undertake this record ; and a subsequent passage, where he assigns a satisfactory reason for the minuteness of some of its details :—

" *Foldhouse, near Whitburn, Thursday, July 1, 1824.*—I have often thought of keeping a kind of *Journal*, for setting down the principal features of Providence respecting me, and the principal dealings of my heavenly Father with my soul. Through sinful procrastination, to which I am naturally inclined, I have hitherto neglected this important duty. After reading a part of the Memoir of HENRY MARTYN, I see so plainly the advantages of recording Christian experience, that I resolve, in the strength of my dear Saviour, to attempt it."

" *August 15, 1825.*—Although it is possible that these memoranda may meet the eye of some friend after my death, yet I write for myself only. Did I

write for others, I should blush at relating so many trivial circumstances in these pages, that cannot interest a single individual but myself. The reason I jot them down is, that though in themselves unimportant, yet they serve, by association, to recall to my mind the sentiments and feelings that occupied it while they were passing, in a more lively manner than a written account of those sentiments and feelings could have done."

The writer is in some degree aware, he trusts, of the caution and delicacy that are necessary in quoting from the journals of the deceased; and this explanation, left by his beloved relative himself, should doubtless exert a salutary influence in precluding all such extracts as could serve no valuable purpose to the Christian reader.

From various passages in letters addressed to his nearest connexions, as well as from several entries in his journal, it appears that, in common with not a few of those whom God appoints to public service in the Church, he was for a time the subject of exceedingly deep and agonizing convictions. Impressed with the horrid evil of sin, and feeling the native enmity of his heart against God in all its odiousness, he was almost tempted to despair. The riches of divine mercy, however, and the boundless merit of atoning blood, were so revealed to his mind that he obtained a happy relief, and was enabled not only to "turn to the stronghold," but to abide in that refuge, and to "comfort others with the same comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God." A letter to his

mother, dated "Foldhouse, 21st June 1823," contains the following passage :—"My dear mother, I think myself happy here, provided I hear that you are happy. I hope that, though at a great distance, you will still take an interest in my concerns. Above all, Oh ! never forget to pray for me—that you and I, and my dear sister, and all our friends, may be one in Christ. Alas ! alas ! I am utterly unworthy of any person's prayers ; but have not I the more need of them ? If I venture to tell any person, it ought to be you, that, hard-hearted as I am, the Spirit of Christ has enabled me to risk my all for time and eternity on the Rock of Ages, and to Jehovah my righteousness be all the glory. I am extremely ungrateful, often sinning ; but his mercy endureth for ever."

Writing to his sister at a subsequent date, he alludes still more particularly to his religious experience :—"As for myself, I never had any particular concern about my soul until the second year of my attendance at College, when 'Alleine's Alarm,' and 'Doolittle on the Lord's Supper,' sometimes made me tremble for fear of everlasting burnings. These impressions, however, though they never since completely died away, did not immediately draw me to the Saviour. I saw that I ought to glorify God and save my soul, but I loved my sins better than both. If I have now been turned from darkness to light, I cannot tell exactly when that blessed change took place. I think, however, it was some considerable time after my coming to Foldhouse. Sometimes I yet ask myself, 'but can such a vile wretch have really been

a subject of regenerating grace? Is it possible that, if I have any love to God, I should be so little devoted to his glory, and so little hate sin?' The only answer I can give is, 'that surely I am very different from what I once was. Once, I could not think of God without secret dislike and jealousy; now, I can approach him as my father and friend, and nothing grieves me so much as that I should not love him and serve him as he deserves. Once, all the concern I had for other people's souls led me to form rash judgments of their religious characters; now, I think I should be willing to do or endure any thing, that I might be the means of winning souls to Christ. And when I think of these things, I feel it a debt I owe to Divine grace to conclude favourably.'"

In the following extract from his Diary he explains his own religious feelings by comparing them with those of another: "July 28, 1824.—Read this morning the 14th chapter of John. Perused the half of a little book, entitled '*False Hope Destroyed, and Despair Removed*,' which I have from Mr Brown. The experience of the writer, previous to conversion, was, in many respects, very similar to my own during the year 1822 and part of 1823. Let me look back with lively gratitude on the horrible pit from which I have been drawn by divine love, and cleave more closely to the solid rock on which I trust I now rest. I cannot say that I was long at one time in absolute despair, as that gentleman was, but I was very often on the borders of it. What he says about the imagined possibility of dethroning the Almighty, is truly horrifying to think of; but I verily believe that his

heart could not harbour more enmity against God than mine *then* did, although perhaps it never assumed that specific form. He mentioned his trying to plead the freest promises at the throne of grace, and not being able to find any access to the Father of Spirits. This is very like my case. I can now, however, constantly rest on words like these, ‘*Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out.*’ ”

His whole soul was richly imbued with evangelical sentiment. The cross of Christ was his only resource. To this he betook himself, at once for peace to his wounded conscience, and for incentives to purity in heart and conduct. Nor was he an utter stranger to the joy of faith. Redeeming love was the object of his delightful contemplation, and he gladly embraced opportunities of encouraging his correspondents, as well as his own soul, to rely on a faithful God, and to regard Him as their portion and chief happiness, both for this world and the next. “Oh, precious Saviour!” says he at one time, “my hiding-place from all my foes. I flee to thy everlasting arms, to be protected against my very self.”—“I have this evening,” he says again, “experienced something like a revival in devotion. Still, however, it is indeed a day of small things. It is dangerous to look much on our experiences themselves, as a ground of hope that we shall yet see better days. We ought rather to fix our attention on those truths which excited our love, our penitence, our hope, our joy, and by this means these blessed states of mind will be perpetuated and strengthened.”

A long entry, comprising a variety of incidents, is thus concluded:—“I ought to reckon it a very great

mercy that, when not under deep impressions of the Divine presence and the Divine love, I cannot feel happy. Thus my Heavenly Father, when I forsake him, hedges my way with thorns, prevents me from finding rest, that I may return to Him as my only real and satisfying portion. I do not indeed feel so oppressed with the weight of sin that hangs upon me and weighs me down to earth, nor is my longing after the enjoyment of my God so ardent as might well be expected, when for a season I lose my sense of his favour; yet I do feel that nothing less than God and holiness will satisfy me. Oh! when will the day come—a day by me to be eternally remembered—when I shall see Jehovah's face without a cloud intervening, and appear before him washed in the blood of the Lamb, with not one spot remaining to dim the lustre of the Divine image? I know it fast approaches; but I cannot be satisfied while I am making so little if any sensible progress towards that state of purity into which it will introduce me."

In a letter from Foldhouse to his mother, he endeavours to animate her confidence in God by the following words:—"I trust that, before this time, you have completely recovered from your late severe cold. Whatever be the circumstances you are in, I rejoice to believe that *He careth for you*, whose past loving-kindness you never think of but with a glowing heart, and who is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' There is not, there cannot be, a more pleasant state of mind than that in which, with unspeakable satisfaction, the soul veers, as if by instinct, towards the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus—in which, when friends abound, we can see beyond them all to the kind hand that prompts them forward to acts of friendship, and in which, when our comforts decline, from whatever cause, we can still say with the Psalmist, ‘Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.’ I would give rise to incorrect ideas of the temperature of my mind, were I to say that such is unvaryingly its happy condition ; but I can say this much, that I speak so far from experience, that, when I am not in this state of mind, I feel unhappy, and when I am, I think the moments during which I continue in it, more precious than a *whole eternity* of different feelings.”

In replying to a valued friend who had written to him with much Christian frankness at the close of a season, he feelingly recognises the constraining power of the cross. “I am happy, indeed, to think you were employed so properly at the conclusion of the year. My own unstableness during the past year fits me for using with you (but with a tenfold greater emphasis) the language of confession and regret. But let us never think of our sins without at the same time thinking of our Saviour who bore them. Ah ! it is lamentably true that we have advanced little in the cultivation of the Divine image in our own souls, and have done almost nothing for the honour of the religion of Jesus, and the salvation of the souls of sinners. Must we then satisfy ourselves with an undefined regret, that we are not at all what we should be ? No ; if we wish thoroughly to feel our past inactivity, or to arm ourselves with well-formed resolutions for the future, let us look to the

cross. O that the Holy Spirit would open our eyes to behold the amazing sight. Who is *he* whose body, but more his spirit, writhes in agony unutterable? It is Emmanuel, the Creator of all 'worlds, in the likeness of sinful flesh. It is our Redeemer, our Friend. He suffers the very tortures *we* should have eternally borne, and has delivered us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. And can we ever be cold in his service? Can we refuse either to labour or to suffer for his dear sake? Oh! shall we not rather be willing even to die, if necessary, for the name of the Lord Jesus? And yet our experience tells us that often we *are* cold in the service of Emmanuel, and that, instead of being ready to die for him, we are scarcely willing to live for him. But why is it thus? Just because the cross is too seldom before our thoughts."

The gracious change he had undergone was manifested by the frequency and alacrity with which he called on God by *prayer*, while his progress in the Divine life was greatly promoted by means of this exercise. His journal supplies numerous evidences of the importance he attached, both to his own supplications and the intercessions of others on his behalf, as appointed means of receiving the most valuable blessings.—“*Sabbath, Sept. 19, 1824.* This morning read the 79th Psalm, and enjoyed considerable comfort in prayer. In the evening read the last chapter of Romans, and was enabled to pray earnestly, and, I hope, with faith and expectation. The principal subject of my petitions was my need of Divine

grace to enable me to do any thing good. My heart is so lamentably deceitful, so awfully, so desperately wicked, that nothing short of this can have the smallest good effect that will prove permanent.”—“*Dec. 14.* For a short while after the dismissal of the school, I enjoyed more than ordinary communion with my Heavenly Father in prayer. I felt as if I could not leave the footstool of mercy, before obtaining a blessing on myself and my scholars. I had another delightful season of this kind near midnight, at the usual time of my evening devotion. I was strengthened by Divine grace to look beyond myself and all created excellence, to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, of which I was reading in the 10th of Hebrews, on the foundation of which I could approach my redeeming God in the full assurance of faith. How inconceivably rich and glorious is free grace !”—“*Dec. 25.* After prayer in the morning, I could say, in language something like that of the Roman senator, ‘ One hour’s communion with God, through his dear Son, is worth a whole eternity of worldly joys.’”—“*Jan. 9, Sabbath, 1825.* I was blessed with two very pleasant seasons of prayer this evening, one immediately after coming home, the other after supper and family worship. I had just been reading with tears, I trust of love and joy, the 1st chapter of Revelation. I was much captivated by the majestic and eloquent description given by the beloved disciple, of the appearance of his and my great Redeemer. I felt I could not be happy unless Jesus were my all and in all, and unless my person, my studies, my scholars, and my friends, were under

his management and care. ‘Who is like the Living One, who was dead and is alive for evermore?’—“*Jan. 30, 1826.* Got considerable comfort in prayer this evening, my heart being enlarged to entreat for all who are dear to me the loving-kindness of a redeeming God, and to pray that the Redeemer might be exalted and made very high in the salvation of many sinners. I again go to resign myself to sleep. To whom shall I commit my unconscious spirit, and my defenceless body? Who shall keep away from my dwelling the thief and the robber? Who shall guard my soul from the more formidable destroyers that seek its endless ruin, my lusts, and the god of this world? Oh! Friend of sinners, *my* friend, *my* God, thou shalt be my shield; I shall come under the shadow of thy wings, and safely lodge myself in my everlasting hiding-place. Oh! take not thy Holy Spirit from me.”—“*April 13.* Amid a good deal of wandering, I was enabled this evening to hold some fellowship with God in prayer. I was led to pray particularly about the number of my years on earth. I did not ask a multitude of days, nor did I entreat a speedy removal to a world of glory; but I besought my God to fit me for the toils and sufferings of years, if years be appointed me; or if otherwise, and I am to be called to eternity in the beginning of my days, I prayed that I might hasten unto the coming of my Lord, and say with John, ‘Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.’ I am not yet the broken and contrite sinner I wish to be. When shall my stony heart become a heart of flesh? Lord, when thou sheddest abroad thy love in my

soul. ‘Come then, Spirit of adoption, fill me with light and love and purity ; for till I have some measure of light and love and purity, I shall never be broken in spirit for my darkness, my deadness, and my sin.’ ”

We have seen the humility and earnestness with which he solicited the prayers of his mother. That he put a similar value on those of his pious grandmother, is manifest from the following extract of a letter to her, dated Glasgow, Sept. 29, 1825 :—“ I hope, therefore, you will excuse my not coming to Airdrie, and not attribute it to any want of affection on my part. I am sure you believe me when I say that I often think of you, and make mention of you at our Heavenly Father’s throne. I hope you do not forget the peculiar need I have of your prayers, as a student. Students need more than ordinary wisdom, zeal, love, seriousness. Pray then, dear grandmother, that these may be granted me from the repository of all fulness.”

His veneration for the *Holy Scriptures* was deep and persevering ; and whilst he read them daily, he devoutly listened to the lessons they inculcate, and increasingly experienced their salutary influence and consoling power—“ *August 13, 1824.* Read in the evening the 13th of Leviticus, which treats of the plague of leprosy. I read for a considerable time before I recollected what a fit emblem it is of the dreadful and deep-rooted disease we bring into the world with us, and which we nowhere can be cleansed from but in the fountain opened for sin and unclean-

ness. I was enabled by Divine grace to feel my weakness, and, in the act of applying at that precious dispensary, to cry out with the leper, ‘Unclean, unclean.’”—“*Nov. 18, 1825.* At my evening devotions I read the 4th of 1st John. I see a beautiful connexion through the whole of that chapter, which I never was able to trace before. It is, indeed, one of the simplest and least ornamented passages in all the Bible. Yet, can there be any thing more precious to a sinner than the indubitable testimony it contains to the love of God, and the grand manifestation of it—his sending his Son to be the Saviour of the world? Nay, can there be any thing more sublime? ‘God is love; herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.’ How vast the idea! Can a human intellect grasp it? It is like an invisible animalcule trying to comprehend, in one wide conception, the vastness of creation. It is deep, I cannot fathom it; it is high, I cannot reach its summit; its breadth and its length baffle the straining mind. Oh, to be lost in wonder, in sweet and holy amazement! Though I cannot comprehend it, may it be all my study, and all my delight. May I die with the love of God in my heart and in my tongue, and sing its praises to eternity, amid ransomed millions.”—“*Feb. 10, 1826.* I have just been reading the 132d Psalm, and found relief to my hungry spirit from the promise, ‘I will satisfy her poor with bread.’ I knelt before my heavenly Father as one of the poor of Zion, whom he has promised to bless.”

Actuated by an ardent thirst for Scriptural knowledge, he studied the book of inspiration in the original tongues, and persisted with much assiduity and pleasure in his efforts to ascertain the true import of its language, and to learn with accuracy the whole counsel of God. In a letter to a relative he says, "I continue to read the Hebrew Psalter with much pleasure, and also the New Testament." His journal, too, contains the following entry :—" *May 13, 1826.* Yesterday I had a parcel and letter from R—t S—n. The parcel contained my Greek Testament, with the various readings I so much desired, and an interleaved English Bible with marginal references I had ordered him to send me, both of which may be of very essential service to me in the critical study of the Scriptures. Blessed Spirit of Truth, accompany these means of understanding thy word with thine effectual blessing ; for without thee I can do nothing. Make me mighty in the Scriptures ; and the more I know them, may I love them the more, and be the more conformed to them by purity and heavenly-mindedness."

In the perusal of *human writings* on religion, as well as the sacred volume, it was uniformly his endeavour to unite the cultivation of the heart with the improvement of the intellect, and to keep his mind altogether open to the practical impression of the truth. This statement is apparently justified by the following specimen of the devout reflections and personal application he was accustomed to make :—" *Aug. 6, 1824.* In the evening read the first seventy pages of *Henry Kirk White's Remains*. I

have by no means talents to be compared in the *slightest* degree with his. But, no doubt, I have some talents. I have been endeavouring to lay these at the feet of Him from whom they proceeded, as their source. Often do I pray, when thinking on this subject, ‘ Lord Jesus, receive my spirit !’ And what else would a soul redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus say ? What ! shall I devote even the little talent of which I am possessed, to any thing short of magnifying my dear Emmanuel ? No ; whatever my unbelieving, sinful, fretful heart may often suggest to the contrary, let it never be.”—

“ *August 13.* After tea, read *Henry Kirk White’s Remains*. Charmed with the change wrought in him by Divine grace. I wish to be grateful for the invaluable advantages I have enjoyed in point of education. Though decidedly serious, Henry, at least so far as I have read, has an unsafe way of expressing himself about conditional salvation, very unlike that of our *Marrow* divines, even the most shallow of them.”—“ *May 2, 1825.* I am reading *Witsius’s* ‘ *Dissertation on the Crucifixion and Death of Christ.*’ He is very warm. My feelings in reading are generally frozen, compared with those he must have experienced in writing.” A letter to a cousin, written in the same month, contains the following notice of a celebrated poem :—“ I am reading *Young’s Night Thoughts* ; and there I find some of the sublimest thoughts that ever were conceived or uttered by an uninspired mortal on the subject of immortality. I am at present at the very best part of the poem, ‘ *The Fourth Night.*’ I like that part

better than any other I have yet read ; for this reason, that he draws consolation in view of eternity, directly from its only genuine source, the cross of *Him* who hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Yet even the other parts, which are perhaps more philosophical than religious, are very sublime, and fully contradict what he says at the end of the ‘ First Night ’—

‘ I roll their raptures, but not catch their flame.’”

With whatever sentiments of esteem and admiration he regarded wise and good men whose writings he consulted, or whose conversation he enjoyed, it was not his practice to repose a blind and implicit confidence in their authority. On various topics, at least, he thought very freely, and very maturely, for himself ; and nothing afforded him greater delight than to receive heavenly truth, directly, pure and unadulterated, from its original source. “ After my evening devotion, in which I felt considerable pleasure and comfort,” says he, in July 1824, “ I spent nearly two hours in studying the doctrine of election. Let me not try to fathom such a mystery—let me never think of it without holy awe, because hidden things belong to the Lord our God, but those that are revealed unto us. Let me give all diligence to make my calling and election sure. Whether I am elected or not, is a question I cannot, in the first instance, answer. But let me lay hold of the precious promises addressed, not to the elect, but to sinners of every description ; and then I may safely conclude that I was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Oh, may I be to the praise of the glory

of his grace, who hath made me accepted in the Beloved ! ”

On the nature of faith, that much disputed topic, he felt particularly anxious to form Scriptural and accurate ideas. At one time, after leaving some friends in whose company he delighted, he has this memorandum—“ We had a great deal of conversation on the nature of saving faith, which I hope may have been useful to us all.” At a subsequent date he adds, “ The controversy on faith was maintained with some smartness to-night ; and I am afraid that speaking of the powers of the soul, or rather the soul itself, (for such is the gross notion that keen debates almost unavoidably introduce,) as divided into the understanding and the will, does not tend to illustrate, but to darken the subject ; and therefore I wish in future, in speaking of faith, to avoid saying that it is a simple act of the understanding, but only to speak of the soul’s believing, or counting true, the Divine testimony.”

His views regarding the immediate access which, according to the Gospel, sinners have to the Saviour, are thus expressed in a letter to a relative, of date, Foldhouse, July 7, 1825 :—“ I agree most cordially with Mr Brown in attaching great importance to the *Marrow*, or rather the Bible doctrine, of the gift of Christ to sinners *as such*. This delightful and heart-warming beam of Divine grace, is sufficient to enlighten and cheer us, when, with regard to every thing else, such as past experience and marks of grace, we walk in darkness and have no light. For want of a distinct conception and steady recollection

of this part of evangelical truth, (if I may so speak of what is in fact the substance of the Gospel,) I think it was, that, in the summer of the year 1822, I was in a most uneasy state of mind, and one most inimical to the cultivation of holiness. While at K—— that summer, *Doddridge's Rise and Progress* was my constant manual. That excellent book seems lacking, if not in the doctrine of the gift of Christ, at least in the way of exhibiting it. There is not a word said of it, till a good deal of time has been taken up in endeavouring to convince the sinner. Now there is no question but we must feel, and deeply feel, our need of the Saviour, before we can accept of him. Yet I cannot help thinking it very improper intentionally to keep him out of sight till the fears be aroused and the feelings melted. To look at him is the best method for causing tears of contrition to flow. Why fear that any sinner will too soon believe? No doubt there is danger of presumptuous hope; but the danger on the hand of legality and final unbelief is much greater."

During his residence at Foldhouse, the *Christian Sabbath*, with its exercises, was peculiarly dear. The evangelical simplicity and energy that characterised the discourses he heard, made the happiest impressions on his mind, while the anticipations of the morning, and the reflections of the evening, afforded inexpressible delight. In several letters to friends, he explicitly acknowledges the great benefit he reaped from MR BROWN'S ministry, as the means, in particular, of giving him more "cheering and consolatory

views of the Gospel" than he had previously imbibed. "Formerly," says he, "I knew not how to plead the promises of the Gospel, nor how to appropriate the Saviour and his blood-bought blessings to myself;" but having heard for some time that venerable servant of Christ, "these subjects seemed to change their aspect; and what was doubt and difficulty before, was converted into hope and welcome." The memoranda successively recorded in his journal, still further manifest the holy joy he experienced under the glad sound of the Gospel.

"*July 13, 1824.*—Had very few scholars to-day, as there was a kind of fair at Whitburn. It is but a very few years since a fair-day was anticipated by me as the happiest I could possibly enjoy. Now, I think the prospect of a Sabbath, especially a Communion Sabbath—O that I might safely add an eternal Sabbath!—is far more delightful."—" *Nov. 14.* Mr Brown lectured on Jacob's meeting Esau, and preached again on 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' Had some sweet meditation on the character of God on the road home at night. When I passed *Mr Waddell's* house, I could not refrain from stopping and craving a blessing on the dwelling of one who loves and serves the Redeemer. Spent the remaining part of the evening in reading the *Scottish Missionary Register* for October, in which are related many conquests of the King of Zion. May the number increase, and his subjects appear like the grass of the fields!"—" *Nov. 21.* Mr Brown lectured on Jacob's wrestling with the

Redeemer, and preached from Psalm xxv. 11, 12, 'What man fears God? His soul shall dwell at ease.' Felt somewhat of the delightful peace of mind on which Mr Brown sweetly expatiated. It is a blessed thing indeed to trust in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."—"Nov. 26. Read Brown's large Catechism on the covenant of works, with a view to Mr Brown's examination of the students to-morrow. I have still to acknowledge the light of my Redeemer's countenance. Sweet, sweet are the rays of the Sun of righteousness, breaking through the darkness of my natural state."

"Jan. 16, 1825.—My mind exceedingly trifling almost the whole day; had, however, some tastes of the sweetness of the Redeemer and his grace. Mr Brown lectured on Jacob's vision at Bethel, and preached a second time on Rom. vi. 14, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.' From his conclusion, I was encouraged to believe that I was delivered from the curse and power of the broken law, and joined to the Surety of the better covenant."—"Feb. 20. Mr Brown lectured Psalm cix. 11—21, and preached a sermon intended especially for young children, from Matt. xxi. 15, 16. I have been graciously favoured with some refreshing draughts by the fountain of mercy."—"March 13. Mr Brown preached again on *the good fight*, by way of improvement. One of his evidences of our fighting the good fight of faith, was love to the Captain of salvation. I do think I have some esteem for my blessed Master, although

feeble, indistinct, and intermitting, and infinitely disproportioned to what he deserves from every sinner, and from none more than myself."

"*April 30, 1826.*—Mr Brown again preached on *the throne of grace*. He said many sweet things, which I hope have been useful to many, though not to me. There were some of his remarks, however, which the Holy Spirit was pleased to carry into my heart; and I think I am more resolved than ever to make the throne of grace my constant resort, my only refuge. He told us an anecdote of an excellent man much given to prayer. That holy man was asked why he continued so long in secret prayer? His answer was, it is often long before I obtain communion with God; and when I do obtain it, it is so sweet I cannot think of leaving the enjoyment of it."

The *sacramental solemnities* of Whitburn congregation, and of other congregations in that district, at which Mr Brown was accustomed to assist, proved deeply interesting, and eminently beneficial to this young man. A few extracts will serve to show his alacrity in availing himself of these opportunities of spiritual improvement, and his care in reviewing the manner in which he heard the Gospel, and renewed his approaches to the Lord's Table, as well as in the preparatory examination of his state and conduct.

"*July 2, 1824.*—I endeavoured to entreat the Lord for a remarkable effusion of the Spirit at the approaching solemnity, that we may draw water with joy from the wells of salvation."—" *July 4.* This day has given me good reasons both for saying, 'God

be merciful to me a sinner,' and 'Bless the Lord, O my soul! forget not all his benefits.' For several days past I have felt a more firm assurance of my interest in Christ than ever I formerly had. Well might I look on this with some jealousy, considering the fearful deceitfulness of my abominable heart, had I not been also enabled to lay hold on the precious promises of the Gospel as a poor sinner, and to maintain upon my soul some sense of the surpassing excellence of the Redeemer. Mr Brown preached his *action* sermon from Psalm xxiv. 7, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates,' &c. Mr Ebenezer fenced the table. He preached in the evening from Acts vii. 59, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' While at the table of the Lord I did not feel a rapturous, but yet, I trust, a solid joy in the God of my salvation, founded only on the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of my Redeemer. The subject on which Mr F—— addressed us, was 'God my exceeding joy;' and many sweet things he said on this. What shall thy worthless but highly-favoured servant say more, O Lord my God? O thou King of glory, open the doors of my heart and come in! Come in, thou blessed of the Lord! why standest thou without? Let me feel more habitually thy presence, and be more than ever devoted to thy service. How can I repay thee for thy immeasurable love? I will give thee what thou askest; vile as it is, I will give thee my heart. Lord Jesus, into thy hands I commend my spirit. But stop, my soul; recollect thou art not repaying in so doing. O Lord, I am both soul and body due to thee, for thou hast redeemed

me, O Lord God of truth. Let the sight of him whom I have pierced sharpen my convictions of sin, and rouse my hatred of it. Why so much opposition in my heart to the King of Glory coming in? Is it not on account of my indwelling corruption, my earthly-mindedness, my pride, my self-righteousness, my host of abominations? Notwithstanding all my sin, I will confidently say, 'He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*, the chief of sinners. To free grace I owe all hitherto; to free grace let me still be indebted for all I need; let me be eternally a debtor to the riches of Emmanuel's grace. Amen, and Amen.'

—"July 16. I spent some time in thinking of my Redeemer, and my evidences that I am united to him. That mark of grace I found still to be strongest, namely, that I see the need of his perfect righteousness. But ah! how little, after all, do I love him? How little am I ashamed of my sins? Let me have nothing to do with Socinian and Arminian schemes. The doctrines of free grace are the only doctrines that suit a sinner like me."—"July 18. I went to *Cambusnethan*. Mr Scott preached from these words, 'Behold the man whose name is the Branch,' Zech. vi. 12. I was not in an ecstasy of joy at the Lord's table, but felt a calm and steady reliance on the righteousness, and love, and strength of the Redeemer."

"August 7, Saturday.—I have been endeavouring to examine into my state and character with regard to the important concerns of eternity. What a bad judge a person makes of his own heart, unless when remarkably under the influence of

Divine grace ! I am inclined to be very superficial, yet I cannot say that I am *generally* ready to judge too favourably. I find upon inquiry that I see something of my need of a Saviour, and the preciousness of Jesus the Son of God. I delight in calling God my Father, and my own God in Christ ; and I seem to have some knowledge, though it is very small indeed, of the evil of sin as opposed to the holiness of the Divine character. Why, oh why, am I so little affected with this ? Spirit of grace, exert thy quickening and purifying influence in this wicked heart of mine. As for progress in holiness, upon the whole I am led to believe that I am making some advances, however slow, in delighting to speak the praises of redeeming love, in affectionate regard for the souls of men, in desires after clear and practical views of Divine things, and in devotedness to the Saviour's cause. On this head, I trust, I am not mistaken. If I am, it will be a fatal mistake. Let me always say, ' by the grace of God I am what I am.' I was reading in the 71st Psalm, ' I will go in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.' I desire to adopt these words as my own now when I have another opportunity to-morrow, if the Lord will, of encompassing his holy altar with his people. Let my lips greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee, and *my soul which thou hast redeemed*, verse 23d." — "*August 8.* Went to Mr Morrison's sacrament. Satan, I think, has been making a desperate effort to secure me for himself. But, blessed Captain of salvation, in spite of all his malice and craftiness—

in spite of the assistance he receives from my inward and strong corruptions—thou wilt rescue me from his hand—thou wilt take me as the spoil from the mighty. In great mercy the Lord Jesus condescended, I think, to manifest himself to me, in some measure, at his table. I wish to be particularly thankful that he has made me sensible I did not deserve this, for so wandering from him who is the good Shepherd.”

“*Nov. 6, Saturday.* The Lord’s Supper is to be at *West Calder*. Perhaps I may have an opportunity of once more celebrating my Redeemer’s death. I have been too careless this week in preparing for it, but I cannot think of refraining from the Lord’s table. I am encouraged by having read, in the first chapter of Philippians, that he who hath begun a good work in me will carry it on to the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. That work is still very imperceptible in my soul ; but, if I am not fearfully deceived, it is begun, and I commend my soul to the care of my dear Saviour, that it may be numbered among those ransomed and cleansed in his blood.”

—“*Nov. 7, Sabbath.* I went to *West Calder*. Mr Fleming preached from Heb. xiii. 20, ‘Through the blood of the everlasting covenant,’ a truly excellent sermon. I think I met with my Lord at his holy table ; I felt that my obligations to be the Lord’s, and his only, were renewed and strengthened. Let me only get grace from his fulness in proportion to the opportunities I have of receiving it, and then I shall be a happy man and a holy man.”

“*Dec. 4, Saturday.*—I have been trying to admire

the Redeemer's excellence, and to sigh after something like sincere and ardent love to him, my unseen Saviour. When I think of the greatness and loveliness of his character, and of his infinite grace to perishing sinners, and especially to perishing me, I cannot but feel some faint approaches to supreme affection. But ah ! Why do I not burn with love to Him who bled to death for me, to save me from everlasting burnings, and to bring me to endless life and joy ? To thee, to *thee* will I come, for thou hast all fulness, even the residue of the Spirit. Send graciously the Comforter to shed abroad thy love in my heart. Lord, I hope and cry for thy presence to-morrow, in the solemn and interesting service to which thy providence calls thy people. Let not the prayers of thy people be disregarded. Let not thy faithfulness fail ; but do thou bless the provision of Zion ; Clothe thy priests with salvation, and cause thy saints to shout aloud for joy. O, that we may see the King in his beauty, and that our hearts may be ravished with his love ! Lord, restrain my enemies. Let my sin, neither at this or any other time, have dominion over me. Am I not thine, and bought with thy precious blood ? What then have I to do with the service of Satan, thine enemy ? Oh, leave me not to the will of mine enemies, for I flee for refuge to thine everlasting arms !"—“ *Dec. 5.* Mr Brown preached the *action* sermon from John iii. 35, ‘ The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.’ He dwelt much on that truth, which is indeed the essence of all his sermons, that the promises are yea and amen in Christ. My mind, during this dis-

course, was not in an entirely careless state, but far from being so affected as it ought to have been. Mr Horn fenced the tables, and on a repetition of self-examination, which I hope was impartial, though alas ! not nearly searching enough, I was led to believe, and with gratitude, that I was invited by the Redeemer to his table. I went to the second table, which was served by Mr Horn, who spoke of Christ's dying for our sins. I bless the Lord that he gave me a sight of his blessed countenance, and a taste of his sweet and marvellous grace. I think I felt the love of the Redeemer constraining me to give myself anew to him for pardoning mercy, and renewing and sanctifying grace. I think I felt, in some faint degree, from a sight of my suffering Saviour, the enormous evil of sin. Oh, to feel doubly engaged to the service of the great Emmanuel, who loved me, and gave *himself* for me. I trust I have received out of his fullness grace to strengthen me for the duties he prescribes, and any affliction he may be pleased to send on me. I would also now look forward with joy and hope to the second and glorious appearing of my great God and Saviour, of which it is intended the Lord's Supper should put us in remembrance." Alluding to this solemnity in a letter to his mother, he says:—"The Lord's Supper was dispensed here on Sabbath ; and if showers of blessings have come down in proportion to the precious truths we heard, and the outward mercies we received, there will be much reason for reckoning last Sabbath among *the days of heaven*."

" July 3, Sabbath, 1825.—Mr Brown's *action text*

was 2 Cor. ix. 15, 'Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.' On the gift of the Lord Jesus to sinners, is my hope and my confidence fixed. Oh, I often wonder I was not excluded by very name from a right to receive the Lord Jesus ! I was considerably affected in communicating ; and, so far as I have been enabled to judge, I think my joy was something better than that of the hypocrite, which is only the crackling of thorns beneath a pot. The ground on which I think so is chiefly this—that I know distinctly what is the cause of my joy. It is that I, as a sinner, have received the promise of eternal life through a crucified Saviour ; including in this term *eternal life* all the freedom from guilt—all the abundance of favour—all the wisdom and sanctification—all the happiness, and all the glory, which the Gospel represents as the purchase of my Redeemer's blood, and the freely bestowed gifts of unspeakable love. MR BROWN of *Inverkeithing* preached an excellent discourse in the evening, at the tent, to a large and attentive assembly, from Psalm lxxii. 16, 'I will go in the strength of the Lord God.' The following is the method he followed :—I. The meaning of the resolution, 'I will go,' &c. It means, I will persevere, 1st, in believing expectation ; 2d, in devotional duty ; 3d, in moral duty ; 4th, in mortifying corruption ; 5th, in bearing affliction. II. Reasons why we should form a resolution of this kind :—1st, the greatness of Divine power makes it practicable ; 2d, his promise makes it warrantable ; 3d, the relation in which the saints stand to God renders it suitable ; 4th, the comfort enjoyed renders it

advantageous ; 5th, the command of God renders it binding.”

“ *August 14.*—Accompanied —— to Bathgate, where the Lord’s Supper was dispensed in MR MORRISON’S congregation. I was, as has been very often the case with me at sacramental solemnities, in a cool state of mind ; that is to say, not very elevated, yet resting with some little degree of calm reliance on the righteousness and strength of the Redeemer. I have been trying to crucify my sins, especially sloth. O let this and all my corruptions be nailed to the cross. On the way home we conversed on the sermons we had heard, especially MR DUNCAN’S,* which we all thought peculiarly intelligent and excellent.”

“ *October 23, Sabbath.*—I rose this morning with thoughts most completely turned away from spiritual objects. It pleased the Father of mercies, however, in a considerable degree to alter the current of my thoughts, through means of the reading of the Scriptures and prayer ; accompanied, I trust, by the effectual operation of the Divine Spirit. On the way to the church, I endeavoured to bring my mind into the state most favourable to a pleasant and advantageous approach to the communion table. I recollected what Mr Brown had recommended to us more than once—that it well becomes us, having lately had so many warnings of our mortality in the death of others, to observe this ordinance as dying men. I tried, in the strength of grace, to suppose myself on the brink of eternity ; and, in this situation, to ask myself on what shall I hang my everlasting welfare. I felt that no-

* The Rev. Professor Duncan, Mid-Calder.

thing could safely support it but the finished work of the glorious Emmanuel ; and on him, with the most implicit confidence, I see I might trust. In these meditations I enjoyed more joy and peace in believing, than I had done for a long time before. I was not equally well during the whole of the day. At the table of the Lord I experienced some meltings of heart in contemplating the love of the Son of God, who loved us as the Father loved him. What shall I render to the Lord Jesus for his generous, boundless love? Let me love him who first loved me. How cold, how worthless, the return I make for the love which passeth knowledge! Mr Brown's *action* sermon was from Psalm lxxxv. 8, 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak; he will speak peace to his people, and to his saints.' Blessed be the God of peace, who has devised a plan for making peace with his enemies."

"June 4, 1826, *Sabbath morning*.—I go an ignorant, heartless, unholy creature; in infinite mercy go with me, O thou who hast loved me! I go empty and hungry; O bring me to thy fulness, to the fatness of thy house, and of thy holy place! Be thou exalted, O dear Saviour, and thy glory, over all the earth! Let many a ransomed soul burn with ardent love to thee this day; let many a heart beat high at the contemplation of thy matchless, excellent, and incomparable love. O let us see thy face, let us hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely! Thy banner over us be love.—*Evening*. I will love the Lord; for he has heard my prayer, and has dealt bountifully with me. I have indeed been

rather in an empty sort of frame to-day, and on the whole have had little impression of the presence of God, and the reality of the truths I have heard, and the solemnity of the exercises I was engaged in. Yet let me beware of complaining that I have not experienced all the comfort and edification from this day's service that I could have wished. Must He not do with his own as he pleases ; and especially shall I not submit to Him, who will cause all things to work together for my good ? At the table I tried to *remember* Jesus ; and this simple remembrance of him, as my Saviour and God, gave me a peace that passes understanding. The object of Mr Fleming's discourse was to prove the divinity of the Redeemer—a point of the very last moment. He who died for me is the same who created the heavens and the earth, who upholds them by the word of his power, and regulates all their movements and minutest changes. This God shall be my God for ever and ever. Amen. Halleluia."

"*July 2, Sabbath.*—Mr Brown's text was Gal. ii. 20, 'Who loved me, and gave himself for me.' Mr Ebenezer preached the evening sermon from Rom. viii. 34, 'Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died.' What ! Is it growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, to become more and more lukewarm ? Last year, on a similar occasion, my graces were more vigorously exercised than they were to-day. To-day, though I could sometimes attend tolerably to what was said, I wanted *reality* in my contemplation of the truth. It is here my difficulty almost always lies. Yet I did not cry

earnestly for the Spirit of Christ to enlighten and quicken me. What sweet remembrance I had, however, of Him who loved me and gave himself for me, will, I hope, prove, in some measure, fatal to my lusts, and nourishing to my graces. When reflecting on my barrenness and want of progress in the Divine life, how shall I get relief? I must just come anew to the fulness of my God and Saviour. O my Lord and my God! I am nothing and less than nothing, but thou art all and in all. It rejoices me to think, that, though many who have been seeking the Lord Jesus may have been, for wise and holy reasons, left in darkness this day, there are most certainly a great many who have been inflamed with new and more ardent love to the Lamb of God. If there were any of the exercises I joined in with earnestness, it was in singing, *Worthy the Lamb.*"

From the tenor of the memoranda just quoted, it is clear that the intensity of his religious feelings did not preclude the exercise of a calm and discriminating judgment. The following extract of a letter to a friend, may serve still further to evince his care to blend rational and deliberate inquiry with warm devotional feeling:—"It has often occurred to me that, probably, much of that coldness of affection we feel, while at the Lord's table, arises from our endeavouring to force ourselves into a considerable degree of ardour of feeling. I am persuaded it would be a more likely way to make the ordinance useful to us, and, indeed, to give us that degree of ardent feeling which we desire, to endeavour to bring our minds as calmly and sedately as possible to the contemplation

of the memorials of our Redeemer's death, and of the great truths connected with it. This will, under the influence of Him without whom all will be useless, produce a serious vivid conception of those objects that ought to give occasion to our feelings. But we are too apt to make a violent effort to reach our end, without deliberately applying the means which are to effect it."

Few have been more alive than was the subject of this narrative to the pleasures and advantages of *religious conversation*, and the free communication of sentiment among the friends of the Redeemer. His journal includes numerous allusions to the comfort he felt in conference of this description with individuals he met with on various occasions, and in particular on the Lord's day, or during the time of a communion. He mentions, for example, the happiness he enjoyed in the spiritual talk of the ministers at Mr Brown's house, on the Monday after the administration of the Lord's Supper, in summer 1825, when a variety of interesting anecdotes were told. After introducing the name of a certain excellent individual who belonged to the party, he adds: "More than once in his prayers, in his sermons, and in his conversation in the house, he took notice of the young generation of ministers who are rising to fill the places of him and his brethren. Who would not love such a follower of the Lamb?" He refers again to a "pleasant, though short interview," he had at Foldhouse in July 1826, with two young friends, one of whom was the REV. JOHN SIMPSON, now a mis-

sionary in Jamaica. A person who knew him well, alludes to this feature of his character in the following terms, in a letter addressed to his sister subsequently to his death:—"I can never forget the impression his entire devotedness to the cause of Jesus made upon me soon after he came amongst us. Well do I remember the lively and active, yet modest part he was ever ready to take in religious conversation, and the delight it seemed to afford him. It was never owing to him, if the conversation was not edifying and useful. Indeed, his whole *walk and conversation* was such as was calculated to produce a salutary influence on all who enjoyed his friendship."

In one of his letters to a relative, he expresses his deep regret, with regard to the professed Christians of a certain district, that "though there seem to be many really serious people among them, there is so extremely little intercourse betwixt them on the subject of experimental religion. I know not almost one who could say of another, 'Such a man has had to fight his way through darkness and despondency, but has now attained to peace and joy in believing.' I do not mean that we should, in a formal way, acquaint one another of the minutest thoughts and feelings of our minds, (although this, if deemed proper, might be very useful,) but that such an opening on the subject of practical godliness ought to exist among us, that we would feel no sort of restraint in communicating our spiritual joys to each other, or requesting one another's sympathy, advice, and prayers, in situations of darkness or sorrow. In humbly throwing out these hints, I wish to speak as the person who

might expect to receive most and confer least advantage, were the object to be gained."

While his mind was thus deeply impressed with the utility of religious and confidential intercourse among Christians, we do not wonder to find him repeatedly expressing the happiness he experienced in uniting with the pious, not excepting the most illiterate among them, in the usual exercises of *praying societies*.—" *July 15, 1824. Attended the prayer-meeting at Blackfauld. How like a little heaven below is it, thus to unite with a few apparently serious people in devotion, and in religious conversation!*"—" *Dec. 3, Friday. I attended the fellowship-meeting at Blackfauld. There were nine present. The exercises this evening, (being the Friday before the celebration of the Lord's Supper,) consisted wholly in singing and prayer, in which all of us engaged. Far from engaging so spiritually as I ought to do in these holy exercises, I rejoice in the free grace of God, which has enabled me, who formerly reckoned all such employments an intolerable burden, now to regard them with some degree of pleasure. Most of the honest men prayed very fervently; and may the God of all grace, the Hearer of prayer, lend a gracious ear to our supplications, and give us an answer in showers of blessing, for the sake of his Beloved!*"—" *Nov. 24, 1825. Attended the fellowship-meeting at Benthead. We had some very interesting questions about the tree of life, that bears twelve manner of fruits; and the north and south winds, for which the spouse in the Song of Solomon prays.*"

Amidst the appearances of piety in his speech and deportment, the *discipline of the heart* was by no means neglected. His most secret thoughts, feelings, and motives, as well as words and deeds, were often subjected to the ordeal of a rigid scrutiny; and he not only confessed, with heart-felt contrition, whatever his conscience condemned as sinful, but humbly resolved to avoid its repetition, and to mortify the principle of depravity in its most latent and insinuating forms. That this statement is correct, appears from his private exercises in reference to the Lord's Supper, adverted to above, and might be confirmed by numerous additional memoranda, of which the following are specimens:—

“*Aug. 13, 1824.*—Too long of rising, which is too common a fault with me. Let me endeavour, in the strength of grace, to resist my natural inclination to sloth. We must not be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit; and why? that we may *serve the Lord.*”

“*Jan. 7, 1825.*—O that I could acknowledge the finger of God, the finger of my own God and Father, in this slight affliction. Surely he means it for my good. Why then so peevish and downcast? ‘Return unto thy rest, O my soul! the Lord hath indeed dealt bountifully with thee.’”—“*Feb. 25.* I have to look back with regret on my silence in the cause of my Redeemer. Why is not my speech always seasoned with salt? Why does it not always savour of that name which is as ointment poured forth?”

“*Jan. 15, Sabbath, 1826.*—How scattered and trifling have been my thoughts on this holy day! It

requires an effort to fix them on him who ought to be the constant subject of them. Injured Jesus, when shall my sinning cease? When shall I no longer forget thee a moment? Hasten, hasten, in thy time, the blessed day.”—“*Jan. 22, Sabbath.* I did not go to rest last night, impressed, as I ought to have been, with the thoughts of eternity, and consequently arose on this hallowed morning with but very scattered ideas and very wavering attention. Mr Brown improved the numerous deaths that have taken place of late, by discoursing from these words: ‘O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!’ It is a strange, though a true fact, that eternity, with all its vastness of importance, occupies but a very small portion of our thoughts, and takes such a slight hold of our attention that the merest trifle is sufficient to drive it from our minds. Did I speak in the singular number, and relate *my own* experience, I might use language still stronger. Eternity—wonder O heavens, and be astonished O earth!—makes almost no impression on this callous spirit of mine. I cannot realize in my mind the overwhelming idea of an infinite duration; and it is with the utmost difficulty that I can be persuaded that eternity is of any importance at all. Were my mind left to its own workings, what a wilderness, or rather what a chaos, would it be? But blessed be the God of all grace, the promiser of *a heart of flesh*, who has, I trust, in some degree given me such a heart. I feel my hope to be fixed on a sure foundation, the Rock of Ages. Upon what condition, O my soul,

wouldst thou renounce thy hope in the Redeemer? Not for myriads of worlds.”—“*Feb. 24.*” [After alluding to a dispute he had somewhat keenly maintained on a certain theological question, he thus accuses himself of precipitance and forwardness :]—“I know not what to think of this new instance of want of vigilance over my tongue, which so often proves itself an unruly member, and standing in need of constant watchfulness. It is quite plain, at any rate, that in whatever my sin lay in Tuesday evening’s conversation, there was sin and much sin in it. I have been wandering away from the character of him who is meek and lowly in heart.” In a subsequent entry he says, “I have been examining my own heart. The dearest friends I have do not know its wickedness. O that I were purged with hyssop, and made clean! Every time I thus survey my own character, I seem as if I must needs begin again with ‘the first principles of the oracles of God;’ as if there were something radically deficient, which must be supplied before I can move one step in the Christian course. What then is it I want? I think it is a hearty devotedness to God. To deficiency in this I can trace all my worldly-mindedness, all my pride, all my indolence, all my wickedness. Oh, were I but habitually kept under the impression that I am *not my own*, how much more heavenly would my affections become—how much more humble would I be—how much more active—how much more holy, than in the present state of my soul? But what avail my tears? Will they wipe away my guilt? Will they purify my heart? Will they wash my robes

and make them white? Let me look for cleansing to *the name of the Lord Jesus, and the Spirit of my God.*"

The spirituality of his mind is indicated by the following reflection:—"Dec. 26, 1825. I was at Longridge in the evening. The sky was very serene, and the moon shining very beautifully. The pleasing but transient nature of the light of the moon, called to my mind the uncertainty of the continuance of the most peaceful state of mind that one can enjoy on earth, and made me, I trust, long in good earnest for the happy land where the sun shall never go down—where the embittering thought of interruption or end, shall never chasten the joys of the blessed inhabitants."

The return of his birthday generally found him prepared to engage in grateful and penitential recollections of the past, and in serious anticipations of the future.—"*Glasgow, Sept. 16, 1824.* I am now in my eighteenth year, and it were of little consequence that my years pass on so rapidly, were they improved as they fly. How little wiser, and how very little better, since I entered my seventeenth year? I desire humbly to acknowledge the hand of my heavenly Father, who has protected me since that time, and has led me in ways of pleasantness. Young as I am, I must look on myself as approaching eternity, and not only as coming nearer to it than I once was, but actually on the borders of it. I now commend myself, my studies, my friends, and every thing in which I am interested, to the protection and care of the Father of mercies, to whom, in Jesus Christ, be

glory for ever. Amen. If it shall please God to spare me yet another year, I think my earnest wish is, that it may be distinguished for nearer approaches to the image of the Redeemer, for more refreshing draughts of the water of life, for active exertions in the cause of Emmanuel, for more persevering and determined resistance to Satan and my own heart, and for increasing preparation for the city that hath foundations. But *without thee I can do nothing.*—"Glasgow, Sept. 11, Sabbath, 1825. This is my birthday. I am now eighteen years of age. I hope this day has not passed without notice being taken of it, in some respects proportioned to the gratitude and to the self-inquiry it ought to excite. I know I have been lamentably deficient in this single day's duties, as I have been in every part of my conduct, nay, in my most hidden thoughts, from the first opening of my mind to the present hour. O that I may lay hold anew on the great atonement, and consecrate myself anew to him who effected it! MR MUTER* preached both forenoon and afternoon on 'the Lord is at hand.' The occasion of his doing this, was the death of a young man of promising talents and piety, who attended Mr Muter's weekly class for young people. I could not help taking this in connexion with the circumstance of its being my birthday, and the recent death of my friend *James Waterston*, as an uncommonly loud call to me to watch and be ready."

At the close of December, he did not fail to indulge

* The Rev. Dr Robert Muter, Duke Street, Glasgow.

in similar reflections.—“*Dec.* 26, 1824. Mr Brown lectured Genesis xxviii. 10—15, ‘Jacob’s ladder ;’ preached from Deut. viii. 2, ‘Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness.’ I tried while coming home in the evening to recollect my mercies, and to remember the way that the Lord my God has led me these seventeen years in the wilderness. This is the last Sabbath of 1824, and it may be the last Sabbath of my earthly course. If it be, then I confide in my dear Saviour, that the arms of his love shall receive me into glory ; but if I am still to see more Sabbaths, and perhaps more years in this wilderness, then to me to live may it be Christ. May I live in Christ, and by Christ, and with Christ, and for Christ.

“I ought to have remembered yesterday week, that December 18th is the anniversary of my dear grandfather’s* decease. It is now six years since that event, to us so afflicting, took place. He died sweetly in the arms of Emmanuel, commending his children and his children’s children to the God of their father.”

“*Dec.* 31. I was employed in the evening in recollecting God’s mercies, and my own ingratitude and rebellion. I have received innumerable proofs of the Divine mercy during the year 1824 ; and the most remarkable of these are those which concern my soul. I think I am on the whole nearer to God ; that he has drawn me closer to himself with the cords

* The Rev. John Fraser, Auchtermuchty.

of love. Yet I have not been so habitually mindful of the Lord my God as I ought to have been ; I have been often cold and formal in sacred duties ; I have not been watchful enough against temptation ; I have frequently been no stranger to pride and self-conceit, and to vain imaginations ; I have not been so active as I should have been in my duties as a student and a teacher. All these abominations and sins I desire deeply to deplore before the mercy-seat, and to plead their pardon through the blood of Christ. I also earnestly besought my heavenly Father to make me more holy, and more useful, during the remaining portion of my life."

Instances of *mortality* around him, in particular those occurring among persons distinguished for piety and usefulness, or numbered among the companions of his childhood and youth, made a strong impression on his mind, and served much to deepen his convictions of the importance of religion :—

"*July 1, 1824.* I endeavoured to remember in my prayers that most worthy Christian, *Alexander Brownlee*, who this morning lost his son *John*, the staff of his old age. He died in consequence of a stroke which he received from a horse when returning from Shotts' fair on Tuesday. He bore an excellent character, and I hope his name is numbered among the spirits of just men made perfect. My soul, be thou also ready!"

"*Aug. 9.* Young *Mr Waugh* of London died lately ; *Mr Telford* of Buckhaven went to heaven, as Mr Brown expressed it, on the 3d of May last ;

and *Mr Simpson* of the Potterrow congregation [Edinburgh] in April. Let my highest aim ever be, while in this world, to glorify my Father in heaven, by carrying about with me the dying of the Lord Jesus."

"Nov. 22. I attended the funeral of *William Somerville*, a young man a year older than myself, who is the first that has died at Foldhouse since I came to it. If it please the Lord that I should be the next, O may my soul not be surprised, but be found closely clinging to the everlasting and well-ordered covenant, which is all my salvation and all my desire! Blessed Saviour, if thou shouldst hide thy face and deny me thy sensible presence, O leave me not *in reality* for a single moment, or I am undone for ever! Thou art my righteousness, my strength, my all."

"Nov. 12, 1825. I read in the *Weekly Journal* this morning that my grandfather's respected neighbour and friend, *Mr Browning*,* has gone to the possession of his inheritance. I believe he was a real Christian, and longing for the rest that remains for the people of God. I recollect the reply which he made on one occasion to a minister who remarked, that probably he had been much more respected than he was aware. Said the good man, *I wish the love of heaven, and for the love of man*——. He left the sentence unfinished, or only finished by a very significant expression of indifference in his countenance."

* Rev. James Browning, Minister of the Second United Associate Congregation, Auchtermuchty.

“*March 29, 1826.* I—— C——, one of the friends of my childhood, is dangerously ill, and no hope is entertained that she will recover. I tried to pray for her soul and for the rest of the family, and that the affecting dispensation may teach me and all my young friends to make vigorous preparation for the eternal world ; to seek the beginning of holiness, if the good work has never been begun in us; and if it has, to press on to higher and higher advances in it.” —“*April 21.* My mother writes me that I—— C—— is no better, but gives pleasing evidence of piety. This is, indeed, good news.” —“*June 12.* I—— C—— departed, I trust, to a better world, on the 27th April. T—— S—— takes notice of this in a feeling manner.” In a letter to his sister, dated June 17, he expresses himself as follows in reference to the same interesting female’s decease :—“ I long to hear about it from you. I have often thought of her, since I knew she was dangerously ill ; and it is with a melancholy feeling that I think I have prayed for her, after she had gone to the narrow house. I trust that all is, now, well with her. O that we could throw off that shameful delicacy that prevents us from reminding our young acquaintances of the one thing needful. We ought never to miss an opportunity of throwing out the slightest hints on this subject ; for how often by this means has a soul been saved from death ?”

A letter addressed to his mother, of date *Glasgow, August 22, 1825*, contains a pious notice of the death of one of his fellow-students, son of a minister now also deceased :—“ Did you hear,” says he, “ of the

severe loss *Mr Boucher* has sustained in the death of his son *George*, who was of the same year, as a student, with me, and on whom he depended in his old age? He died of consumption. Why has Providence spared me? The reason that would most naturally strike one is, that I might be of some use to my dear mother. It would be impossible to prove that this is not the reason. But it is perfectly plain, how foolish it is to build on any such foundation the hope of long life; for, reasoning in this way, *Mr Boucher* might be justified in repining at his son's removal. This he is far from doing. One of the first things he said after receiving the sad news (for *Mr B.* was at *Airdrie* when *George* died) was, 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.'" He mentions this young man also in his journal, in the following terms:—" *July 28.* I regret to hear that *George Boucher*, one of my fellow-students, and son of *Mr Boucher*, *Cum-bernauld*, has gone the way of all the earth. He had the rare qualification of a good knowledge of Hebrew. I hope he is now in heaven."

No one feature in the character of *John Henry Gardner* was more strongly marked than his *spiritual benevolence*. From the first day that he became deeply impressed with the importance of his own immortal interests, he discovered an active and a growing concern for the salvation of others. The souls of the young, more especially, attracted his tenderest sympathies, and every opportunity of promoting their good he stood prepared to improve. Far

from undertaking the charge of a school *merely* for purposes connected with his own accommodation or emolument, he felt a cordial interest in the welfare of his scholars. Actuated by truly Christian motives and feelings, he not only exerted himself with fidelity to forward their general improvement in the elements of learning, but was peculiarly solicitous to be happily instrumental in impressing sacred lessons on their tender minds, and in saving their souls from death. For this purpose, he examined or conversed with them daily, and in particular every Saturday, on religious topics; he not only made them repeat, or read with attention, interesting portions of Scripture, but familiarly expounded the sense, and inculcated the practical uses to be made of them; he read and commented on suitable tracts and pamphlets; he strictly examined them on the meaning of the questions they repeated; he resolved at length to converse with them in private individually. To all his other efforts, he added frequent and earnest prayer, both in the presence of the children, and secretly in his own apartment; and when he perceived any promising appearances of the success of his labours, he expressed his joy and gratitude in solemn thanksgivings to God, accompanied with importunate supplications for a still more abundant and efficacious blessing. No reader, probably, will consider these statements overcharged, after having perused the few following memoranda, selected from a great number written with his own hand, relative to his labours among the children of his school:—

“ July 3, 1824.—Felt a good deal of concern for

the salvation of my dear pupils. I am afraid I am scarcely aware of the responsibility that attaches to the charge of forty lambs of Christ's flock. O great Shepherd of the sheep, give me grace, I beseech thee, to feed these kids by the shepherd's tents! but especially do thou gather in thine arms, and carry them in thy bosom."—" *July 30.* Tried now and then to say something serious to my scholars. But how often do I forget that they are immortals, and that I am accountable? O Lord, bring these dear young ones to Jesus. O my blessed Saviour, be thou the Saviour of my dear pupils; these lambs of thy flock thou hast committed to the care of thy weak and unworthy servant."—" *July 31.* Spoke with considerable freedom to the children on the 1st chapter of 1st Peter, from which the questions for this day were taken. When praying for them, I think I am enabled to cast them *entirely* on the Lord; considering that I can neither, of myself, perform my duty aright to them, nor make what I say effectual to their everlasting benefit. But I rejoice that with my Redeemer is the residue of the Spirit; and that he has promised to gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom."—" *Aug. 3.* Read to my scholars part of *Emily Geddie's* life, from *The Young Christian*. O Lord, forbid that if any of these children should perish, their blood should be on my head! Make me diligent, and faithful, and humble, in the discharge of duty, and deny me not thy grace."—" *Aug. 7.* Read with my scholars 1st John i., from which I took occasion to tell them of the holiness of God's character, and the necessity of our conformity

to it, of the pardoning virtue of Jesus' blood, &c. Many of them, I think, pay serious attention."—" *Aug. 14.* Examined my scholars on the 1st chapter of Revelation. Let me consign to the care of the Lord Jesus himself, and his Father and Spirit, the little ones under my charge. When speaking of the second coming of Christ, some of them really appeared seriously considerate, than which nothing can more gratify me. I would not value all the riches, or even all the learning, of the world, half so much as one soul saved through my instrumentality; even though lately weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts."—" *Aug. 18.* My school was examined. There were present of the trustees, Messrs Brown and Mitchell, *Crofthead, Leadloch, Braehead,* and William Russell. The scholars did very well. Mr Mitchell exhorted them. We sung the hymn, 'Hosanna to the royal Son,' &c.—" *Aug. 20.* Read *Poor Joseph* to the scholars. O that each of these dear children may be enabled to apply to the only Saviour!"—" *Nov. 19.* This week I have enjoyed very sensibly the presence of my Redeemer. I have been reading Brown's *Young Christian* to the scholars, who appear, on the whole, to be pretty attentive. May the Spirit of God fix their hearts."—" *Nov. 20.* Examined the scholars on the 103d Psalm, and endeavoured to direct their minds to the mercies of Providence and grace. They answered the questions pretty well."—" *Dec. 25.* I caused my scholars read the 11th of Matthew, and repeat the three last verses. Some of them seemed to give the most earnest heed. I thank my God for every instance of

this, and pray that they may be effectually brought out of darkness into his marvellous light."

"*Jan. 8, 1825.*—My scholars read Eccles. xii., and answered some questions on it very well. They were in general quiet and attentive throughout."—"*Nov. 17.* I detained T—— M—— to-day, that I might have an opportunity of talking to him alone. I asked him if ever he read the Bible at home; he said he did. I asked him if he prayed; he made no answer, and I took it for granted he had never been taught to address the throne of grace. Oh! what gratitude do I owe for a Christian education, however misimproved. I said to him the substance of what I had said to T—— R——. I asked him if he would now endeavour to pray; he said, *Yes*. So I entreated him, to seek the grace of Christ, to make him pray from the heart. I asked him, in sending him away, if he would endeavour to keep in mind and think seriously of what I had told him; he again replied in the affirmative. I am convinced I have overlooked a great means of benefiting the souls of the children, by never taking them by themselves in this way. I am resolved, therefore, as God's grace shall enable me, to avail myself henceforth, while I continue among them, of this very likely method of imprinting the truth on their tender minds. It will, besides the probability that it may be blessed to the salvation of some of the children, prepare me for the still more interesting and more responsible duties of the ministry."—" *Nov. 19.* I kept little M—— T—— to-day after the rest of the scholars were out, because I thought she seemed deeply interested while

I was proposing questions about the way of reconciliation with God. She could tell me, on my inquiring, that she prayed morning and evening ; that she read the Testament ; that she did not learn a prayer and say it, but just asked what she needed. I asked her if she wished to love Jesus ? she replied with some eagerness, *Yes*. I asked, too, if she would like to hear about him from me now and then, when I had time to speak to her alone ; to this she also replied in the affirmative. This little girl has been very well brought up ; and she now resides with her grandfather, who, she tells me, says a great many good things to her on the Sabbath night. I know him to be a friend to the Saviour, though a doubting and fearing one. What I liked most in the child was, that though not inclined to speak much to me, she had always the answer quite at hand. When I put the question, How did Jesus save us ; or what has Jesus done for us ? She more than once replied, with seeming ardour, *He died for us.*"

" *Feb. 24, 1826.*—On Thursday I began to catechise the children more minutely than formerly, on Brown's Questions. Since the vacation I have examined at least one class in the morning on that catechism. But as I have become more than ever convinced of the necessity of such exercises, since reading *The End and Essence*, and at the same time having got some new ideas on the subject, I have resolved to extend the advantage of them, as far as possible, to all the children who repeat Brown's Catechism. In the mean time, I prescribe only five or six questions each day, that they may be thoroughly

understood before they are passed over." On this topic he gave the following information to a relative, in a letter bearing date *April 22, 1826*:—"I have found the good effects both here and in my Sabbath school of the catechising system. I endeavour, through means of questions, to fix the meaning of every thing in the children's minds, and I have cause to be very grateful for the success which has attended these attempts. They are beyond what I expected. Many of the children answer questions on a religious subject with great readiness, and as if they were interested in what they say. My hope is, that He who willeth not that any of these little ones should perish, will give testimony by his Spirit to the word of his grace."

The partings that took place betwixt the teacher and his pupils, immediately before the autumn vacation, were marked, on both sides, by expressions of tender affection. Let one example suffice:—"Aug. 20, 1825. I read to the scholars a short address I had written for the *Longridge* scholars to-morrow evening. Read also the Apostle Paul's farewell address to the elders of Ephesus, and showed the children in what points the circumstances of Paul and the Ephesians correspond with our own. Many of them were much affected; but whether savingly impressed or not, is only known to the Searcher of hearts. Lord, into thy hands I commit them! Keep them from every snare, and from every evil way. And, if it be thy will, restore me in due time to my labours among these dear children."

In addition to the labours of his day-school at

Foldhouse, he cheerfully assisted Mr Brown in teaching the young people at Longridge on Sabbath; to which he alludes in the last two extracts. Let us hear from himself a few particulars relative to these pious attempts. In a letter to an uncle, under date *Jan. 9, 1826*, after adverting to the state of his day-school, he thus continues: "My Sabbath-school is pretty well attended this winter. Thus has it pleased God to lay me under prodigious responsibility, with respect to the souls of these dear children—responsibility that might make me shrink from my duties as a teacher, were it not that he has also promised to make his strength perfect in weakness. I wish to remember that though I can entreat, I cannot convert my scholars, and to be ready to say, if it shall please the Father of mercies to show me any fruit of my labours, 'Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.'" A letter to his mother, written only about two months after he had taken up his residence at Foldhouse, contains the following notice of his teaching on the Lord's day: "On Sabbath, immediately after dinner I mount the reading-desk, sing a Psalm, then examine from twenty to thirty children on Brown's Catechism, and employ the rest of the time till the ringing of the bell, in reading some interesting extracts from the *Gleaner*, or any similar publication. After tea, again, I have twenty or thirty to teach in the session-house, which occupies till near six o'clock. This school belongs properly to Mrs B——, and she keeps it when inconvenient for me."

A few notices of the Sabbath-schools may also be

quoted from his diary :—“ *Jan. 9, 1825.* I taught the Sabbath-school to-day with considerable pleasure, and with affection to the children. After they had repeated some texts relating to the Holy Spirit, I said a few plain things as affectionately as I could, in order to show the necessity of the blessed Sanctifier, noticing that all had a right to ask and expect his gracious influence. May the Spirit of Christ lead these dear little ones, that they may appear to all to be his!”—“ *July 10.* Taught the Sabbath-school with much pleasure, and was enabled to speak to the scholars with some degree of affection and earnestness. But, O blessed Spirit, if any good be done, thine must be the glory. On thee I throw these dear children, and my ordinary scholars ; for without thee we can do nothing.”—*July 31.* The Sabbath scholars repeated texts in proof of the doctrine of the last judgment ; and when I endeavoured to impress on their minds its solemnities, some of them seemed much affected. Give them, O Lord, more than mere softness of feeling, when such arousing truths are addressed to them. May they now love the Lord Jesus their friend, and have no reason to be alarmed when he appears as their judge.”—“ *Oct. 9.* [After an absence of six weeks.] Taught the Sabbath-school with much pleasure. The children were apparently very glad to see me again, and I am sure I was at least equally happy in being permitted once more to instruct them in the things that belong to their eternal peace.”—“ *Nov. 13.* The children in the school repeated texts about the knowledge of Christ. Examining them on what we should know about the

Lord Jesus Christ, I was very much pleased with their attention, and more than I was before with their answers to my questions. I wish, above all, to impress on their tender minds the doctrine of the atonement. Here my own hopes concentrate, and I earnestly desire these dear children may be partakers of my joy.”—“*Jan. 22, 1826.* I was conscious when teaching the Sabbath-school, that if I had one wish in my soul stronger than another, one of my most ardent desires was, that the souls of the children might be saved. This I told the dear young immortals, who seemed, for the time at least, to give earnest heed. Immediately after dismissing them, and also after returning home, I commended them in prayer to Him who not only suffers, but invites such to seek him.”

Scarcely any practicable means of advancing the spiritual welfare of young people around him was left untried. From some hints in his journal, it appears that he took an active part in a *Juvenile Society* for assisting in the diffusion of the Gospel, and also in a *Young Men's Society*, in the congregation, for prayer and Christian conference. A meeting of the latter is thus noticed:—“*Dec. 1, 1824.* I attended the young men's fellowship meeting. The questions were on Isaiah xxviii. 9,—2 Tim. ii. 19,—Gal. vi. 14. I proposed for the next meeting, 2 Tim. i. 10, ‘Who has abolished death.’ I hope that by attending these meetings, under the blessing of God, my little stock of knowledge may both be increased and laid out to the advantage of others.”

The truth is, that, to his relatives and intimate

friends, he often spoke of his exercises for the religious instruction of youth, as having been blessed for arousing his own mind to a more vivid sense of eternal things.

The worthy Mr Brown, with his accustomed humility and kindness, did not omit frankly to acknowledge, both to himself and others, the aid he received from this estimable young man, in imparting instruction to the lambs of his flock. "I thank you," says he in a letter to him, "for your kind assistance to me in the congregation. I hope there will be good fruits. You know I love you; and hope you will pray for us all."

Mr Brown's affection for him was reciprocated with equal sincerity. In summer 1825, when he was solicited to undertake the tuition of the children of a very respectable family in a different part of the country, he resolved to decline the invitation; and in forming this resolution, was chiefly influenced by gratitude to this venerable minister, and by the pleasure it gave him to lend his humble aid to his pious endeavours for the spiritual good of the young. "My obligations to Mr Brown," he says in his Diary, "and the probability that Providence has set me down near him, that I might have an opportunity of assisting him in his old age, has struck me forcibly."

The memory of his uncommon zeal for advancing the spiritual welfare of the young, seems to be embalmed in the hearts of the pious in that district. At the beginning of the year 1835, his sister had a letter from Mrs W—— of C——, which contains the following expressions:—"The memory of your beloved

brother is still very dear to many of the people here. Several of them have spoken of him to me with the deepest interest: they say there never was a teacher like him for anxiety and care about the children's spiritual concerns."

The success of Sabbath-schools generally was an object he had sincerely at heart; and he gladly embraced an opportunity, wherever it occurred, of addressing young people on the evening of the Lord's day. During one of his visits to K——, he says accordingly:—"Went to Miss D——'s school in the evening, and examined the girls on that interesting passage, John iii. 14—18. They were very attentive."—"This day three weeks," he says again, "I addressed the Sabbath-school which I formerly attended as a scholar, in Auchtermuchty. I felt peculiarly on the occasion. I was enabled to address the dear children in such a manner as seemed to catch their attention. The Sabbath after I taught my own school at Longridge, and also the *morning class of young men*. I feel grateful for these opportunities of showing at least my good-will to the cause of the Redeemer, and the best interests of immortal souls. With God it remains to bless my feeble exertions."

Brevity, perspicuity, affection, solemnity, and earnestness, characterised his addresses to the young; and whatever the ultimate effects may have been, they were generally listened to by them with every appearance of intense interest, as well as respectful attention.

His earliest companions were not overlooked. He kept a benevolent eye on them whilst with himself

they were rising to maturity, that he might not only remember them in prayer, but, as opportunities occurred, remind them of the importance of religion, or administer counsel and encouragement to any one of their number whose mind became alive to the subject. After naming several young men whom he had known from childhood, and whom he had the happiness to meet with in September 1825, he adds: "It is very agreeable to see former playmates doing so well. I trust they do not forget the one thing needful—needful for us all, however different the professions we have chosen." In the spiritual interests of one of these playmates he took a peculiarly heartfelt and a lasting concern, from the moment he received from him a letter, disclosing the state of his mind regarding the great salvation. "I was afraid," says he, "he intended to be witty on the awful subject; but, oh the wonder, the gratitude, that suddenly sprung up in my heart, as I read his account of the awakening that had taken place in his soul! He states that it was on the last Lord's day of the last year, that he was led to see his sinfulness. He entreats me, again and again, to pray frequently for him. I have already been trying to do so, and did it, I trust, with sincerity and humble reliance on him who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. O that the impressions made on my dear ——'s heart may not be a morning cloud, or an early dew—that the good work may really begin and proceed to perfection! O that I may be the unworthy instrument of strengthening his hands in the good ways of the Lord! Perhaps the experience

of the chief of sinners may be of some use to encourage and direct him ; and therefore I determine, in the strength of grace, to write him as soon as possible, and to use every mean that is most likely, under the blessing of my Lord and Saviour, to promote his faith, and hope, and holiness."

The subject of this memoir considered himself a debtor, not merely to the young, but to *all of every class* who had a claim on his brotherly-kindness or charity. Sustaining the capacity of a student and a teacher within the limits of Mr Brown's congregation, he felt his obligation to seek its general prosperity, and was ready to sympathize with each individual connected with it, as circumstances required. This is evident, in some degree, from the following memoranda :—" *May 30, 1825.* This was the day fixed for the removal of that most respectable pair, A—— B—— and his wife, to P——s, where they are to live with their sons. Heavenly Father, when forced by adverse circumstances to leave the place of their fathers' sepulchres, and to sojourn among strangers, let thy presence go with them."—" *June 12.* Felt very much concern for C—— W——, who is in a despondent state of mind with respect to her salvation. Let me, who once dared to doubt, and even yet sometimes practically distrusts the Redeemer's ability to save, sympathize with a person in such circumstances, and implore in her behalf the Divine mercy. Astonish her, blessed Jesus, with a full display of thy grace and truth ; surprise her with thy overflowing compassion, and dispel her fears. If

such are to be pitied, alas ! what tears of blood should be shed for those who, as Mrs B—— expressed it, run carelessly on to hell ?”—“ *March 10, 1826.* On Tuesday, the 28th ult., I attended the funeral of my intelligent friend, old J—— C——, who died on Saturday evening. There is much melancholy pleasure in carrying to the grave the dust of one who was, to all appearance, a follower of the Lamb.”

Among the sick of the congregation or neighbourhood, whom he was invited to visit, no case seems to have interested him more deeply than that of *Agnes Waddell*, who was confined to her bed for the space of fully fifteen years ; and during her long confinement and protracted illness, was enabled to exercise a cheerful resignation to the will of God, and appeared to make great advances in the divine life. We quote the following notices of this interesting daughter of affliction :—“ *Aug. 21, 1824.* I was much gratified in going to see *Nanny Waddell*, who has lain many years in her bed.”—“ *Nov. 12.* Went to see *Nanny Waddell*. She is deeply afflicted, but very resigned. I said she had certainly suffered a great deal of pain ; she instantly replied, ‘ Our Master suffered much more.’ She spoke a good deal, and I perceived she was exhausted. After praying with her for a few minutes, I took farewell of her ; feeling that at least she *ought* to be a friend of mine, as it was evident she was a friend of Jesus.”—“ *Jan. 5, 1825.* I went to see *Nanny Waddell*, and read part of *Ralph Erskine’s Memoir* to her,* which she said

* This was probably a short Memoir of the Rev. R. Erskine, contained in the Rev. Mr Brown’s *Gospel Truth*.

refreshed her very much. She entreated me not to forget her in my addresses to the throne of mercy, because, she said, she was the chief of sinners. I spent thirty or forty minutes very happily with her, and then set out, followed by her earnest prayer that the Lord might be with me on the way. Had some pleasing thoughts of my Saviour and his grace, for which I cannot be duly grateful.”—“ *March 5.* Called for Nanny Waddell, who was very glad to see me. Read a little to her; talked and prayed with her. She earnestly entreated my supplications at the throne of grace, and modestly consented to remember me and my scholars. She observed that she was poor and worthless; but I added that there was One infinitely worthy, through whom we shall always be heard. She dwelt with delight on the glories of the heavenly world. Indeed, she seems as if she were very near it, from her longing so much for it. It may please our Heavenly Father, however, who does all things well, to detain her for years to come in this vale of weeping. O that he may continue with her the light of his countenance!”—“ *May 16, Monday.* Called for Nanny Waddell, to whom I told some of Dr Peddie’s excellent notes on ‘Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,’ with which she said she was much refreshed.”—“ *April 11.* Last evening I went to see poor Nanny Waddell, who has been very ill since I last visited her. Among other things, I gave her the outline of Henry Martyn’s life. I asked her if she did not, in her greatest distress, find the throne of grace accessible? She replied, ‘Oh yes, He can hear a sigh!’” This good woman, we are told, died

about the close of the year 1828, expressing the same humble reliance on the Saviour which she had long discovered.

John Henry's glowing zeal for the salvation of precious souls, induced him to compassionate the condition of wandering *mendicants*; and sometimes when they approached his dwelling, he was at considerable pains to awaken their consciences and enlighten their minds. Two instances of this Christian conduct, in particular, are noticed in his journal. The first, with some abridgment, is detailed as follows:—"Nov. 14, 1825. Before breakfast, a man called whose name is W—— M——, asking charity. He told me he had been a farmer in Ayrshire, but with taking a violent fever his affairs went to wreck, and he lost the power of his left hand. I sent a note with him to Mr Brown, asking him to give him a Bible, if he had one; when he returned, I spent a good while talking to him, and though I found his ignorance to be very great, the conversation I had with him was yet most interesting. He was very open both to instruction and reproof. I entreated him to study the Bible carefully, and to pray earnestly over it. I asked him a great variety of questions, in order to set him a-thinking on the fundamental truths of the Gospel, as well as to discover what measure of knowledge he had. I got him to acknowledge, that in however prosperous circumstances we were, it was in vain to look for real happiness from this world, and then asked him, 'Where he thought we should look for happiness?' He replied, 'We should try to

prepare for a better world.' I asked him, 'What do you think is the only way to prepare for going into another world?' I shall never forget his answer; it was the natural language of the natural mind, that in all ages and in all countries breathes a spirit of legality. 'I think,' said he, 'that the best way is to be honest, and to do our duty to the best of our knowledge.' There is no doubt that had these words been uttered with the same meaning with which the Apostle Paul used the following, 'By patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and immortality,' the answer would have been correct in the highest degree; but it was impossible not to see that he looked on this doing of duty as the ground of admission into the better country; and this was set beyond a question by the ignorance he discovered with respect to the first essential of religion, *faith*. I hastened, therefore, to explain to him the blessed plan of redemption, and I trust I was enabled to speak with all plainness of speech. I told him the story of *Erskine and Freeport*, the two boys at school, one of whom committed a fault, and the other bore the punishment; and this illustration of the atonement pleased him very much. He saw, before I had finished the story, how it applied to the case in hand. He went away, expressing his gratitude to a degree quite immoderate. While parting with him he said he would never forget me; but I entreated him to strive more to remember what I had said than to remember myself. I exhorted him again to read the Bible, and to pray earnestly, both of which he seemed in good earnest resolved to do. When he said he might per-

haps come round this way with a pack, I told him I might never see him again on earth ; but reminded him that we would meet at the judgment-seat of Christ, and then both he and I would have to answer for the truths I had addressed to him. And now that he is gone from my sight, I know not how deep may have been the impression made by these plain but precious truths. I have commended him by prayer to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have entreated my Saviour to take him for his own, and, though I should never be informed of the happy change, translate him from darkness to light, and bring him from the power of Satan to God."

The other instance is related thus :—" *Jan. 7, 1826.* An elderly man called this morning, who comes from the parish of *Sorbie*, in Ayrshire. His family have been thrown into poverty, and some of them lost their lives, by means of a fire that consumed the most of his effects. I introduced the subject of religion, and soon found that, like the other Ayrshire man I talked with some time ago, he was ignorant of the very rudiments of the Gospel. Although he talked of the merits of Christ as having at any rate the chief influence in the matter of our salvation, he could not tell how Christ's dying could benefit us, but only said that he was not a learned man, and did not understand these things. I endeavoured with all plainness and earnestness to declare to him the only way of salvation as being through the atonement of the great Emmanuel. He seemed affected, but would not, he said, give his full assent to what I said *all at once* ; he would need to think about it first. I advised him

carefully to read the Bible, and to pray fervently for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to guide him into all truth. I cannot but feel grateful at this new opportunity I have had of making known the precious Jesus to a fellow-sinner. What an honour to be allowed to speak his praise !”

The subject of this narrative, while, as we have seen, he acquitted himself with fidelity as a teacher of youth, and cultivated the diffusive benevolence of a Christian, did not lose sight, it is obvious, of the ulterior object to which he had aspired from his childhood—*the service of God in the Gospel of his Son*. Having been admitted, as was formerly stated, to the study of divinity in 1823, he heard the prelections of the late learned and excellent DR DICK of Glasgow for five successive seasons. With how laudable a spirit he prosecuted his studies, both at Glasgow during the session of the theological class in the months of August and September, and in the country, under the direction of the Presbytery, during the rest of the year, appears in some degree at once from his letters to friends, and from his memoranda in the Diary.

With regard to the Professor, his lectures, prayers, and mode of conduct towards the students, he speaks in terms of the most sincere respect and esteem. A letter to a relative written during the first session, Sept. 22, 1823, conveys the following information :—
“ As you may have heard, there are an hundred and sixty-three students this year. When I came to the Hall, the Doctor was lecturing on the application of redemption. He has since been considering the bless-

ings of justification and adoption. He commenced with sanctification to-day, by explaining the term, and showing the difference between justification and sanctification, and also regeneration. His lectures are very interesting, and expressed in a very neat and simple manner. He delivers four every week. We have three discourses every day except Saturday, when there are only two discourses, and an examination on Hebrew and Greek, and on the subjects of the Doctor's lectures. Mr W——, who lodges with me, delivered on Friday the 5th, and I on Wednesday last. Although I had my homily written before I left home, I found great advantage from writing it completely anew, and having plenty of time for committing it to memory. This Dr Dick some days ago advised us to do, in order that the discourses themselves may be better, and that they may be delivered with more accuracy and freedom."

The following notices are taken from his Diary :
" *Sept.* 15, 1824. I attended the dinner given by some of the students to Dr Dick. There were present upwards of fifty-three. I enjoyed the evening very much. The appearance of great harmony and union of feeling and sentiment prevailed. The Doctor left us at half-past eight, and the party broke up a little after nine."—" *Sept.* 18. The Hebrew was read in the morning. The Doctor gave us a long lecture on not beginning Hebrew in time. He remarked, that in the best translations there may be, and will be errors, and that it is very pleasing and comfortable to be able to satisfy one's self that the translation he uses in his ministrations among his people is a correct one."—" *Oct.*

12, *Tuesday*. The Hall closed. Dr Dick read a lecture on biblical criticism, which I wrote after him as usual. He gave us some very weighty advices, and prayed for us with remarkable fervour. Never felt so much attached to this venerable man as I did to-day."

This young man seems to have determined at no time to rest satisfied with mere external propriety or intellectual exertion. He was at pains, above all, to cultivate the spirit of devotion. Had he a discourse to deliver, it led him to earnest prayer ; if he succeeded in his attempt, success was sanctified by cordial thanksgiving to God. No interviews with his fellow-students were more acceptable to him than those that had social prayer for their object ; and no day was hailed with a more cordial welcome than the holy Sabbath. These statements are justified by the few following extracts :—" *Sept. 3, 1824*. Rose up early ; endeavoured anew to devote myself to my Redeemer ; sought his assistance in the important duty before me ; delivered my discourse at the morning meeting of the Hall, and was approved of."—" *Sept. 18*. Now approaches the sacred day of rest. O that the grace of the Lord Jesus may be exceedingly abundant, and stir me up to a diligent performance of the duties of such a holy season. As for my sins, let them be at this time, and at every time, shut out ; and as for worldly cares, let them be detained from following me till I go yonder and worship." On a subsequent Saturday he says, " May I be prepared for hearing with humility the word of the gospel to-morrow, not as the word of man, but as the word of the living God." On the evening of the Sabbath after, he thus

records his experience.—“Upon the whole, my mind has been in a better state this Lord’s day than for many Sabbaths past. I hope the Lord has lifted up his countenance on me, and been gracious unto me. How much pride and carnality, however, remain in my heart, God alone can tell. As for me I cannot comprehend them. Mr Muter preached in the afternoon from Luke i. 31, ‘Thou shalt call his name JESUS.’”—“Oct. 7. The students met to-day in the Hall at half-past four, when they engaged in devotional exercises. *Mr Macdowall*, and *Mr John Young, sen.* officiated. A very pleasant meeting.”—“Sept. 28, 1825. Mr T—— delivered in the morning, and I at eleven o’clock. The Doctor made a few remarks, and then said, ‘With these few remarks I approve of the discourse.’ I cannot but be grateful to Him who is ready to help in the time of need, for enabling me to discharge this important duty, without bringing any great dishonour upon myself, as I might do, if left to my own resources and strength.”

With similar conscientiousness, he applied himself to the exercises required by the Presbytery under whose inspection he was placed. Nor did he fail to manifest the same dependence on God for counsel and aid, with the same humility and gratitude, in the event of success.—“July 6, 1824. Went to Lanark. On the road enjoyed some delightful contemplations of God as ‘my exceeding joy,’ and in devoting myself to the glory of my Redeemer. Delivered my discourse on Acts iii. 22, *the prophetic office of Christ*, before the Presbytery, in Mr Harper’s meeting-house. I got encouragement from

the Presbytery to proceed in my studies, and an excellent short advice from *Mr Scott*, the moderator, about studying divinity practically, and making the Bible my text-book ; which, O Lord, give me grace to follow.”—“ *Nov. 29.* After prayer, in which I endeavoured to give myself and my worthless services to the Lord Jesus and his cause, and to ask his guidance and assistance, I began a sermon on Col. iii. 17.”—“ *Dec. 21.* Began my sermon. The best way to succeed in sermon-making is for the writer himself to enter practically into the subject. I have been endeavouring to do this, and to look with earnestness and faith to the blessed Redeemer.”—“ *April 4, 1826.* I have now set myself to write my critical exercise for the Presbytery on 1 Pet. i. 21, a second time. Although I have spent a great deal of time in thinking about it, I have not yet arrived at a distinct and satisfactory view of the passage. May God have compassion on my ignorance. O let my mind, in all its powers, be devoted to thee ; impart new vigour to my intellect, and tenderness to my affections ; and let the one be devoted to the study, and the other to the love of the truth.”—“ *April 5.* I have to record with gratitude what I think was an answer to prayer. I this evening understood my text in its connexion better than ever I did before, and hope now, through the Divine assistance, I shall be able to discuss it to some good purpose. Before setting my mind to the consideration of it, I prayed for fixedness and clearness of thought, and these being in some measure obtained, led me into the meaning of the passage.”—“ *May 24.* I rode to Lanark on Tues-

day morning in company with J—— W——. We had a delightful day and useful conversation. I delivered first, and after me *Mr Millar*, a second year student, lectured, ‘Whom he did foreknow,’ &c., Rom. viii. The remarks on my exercise were almost all of them favourable, so that I was, and still am, in great danger of being elated. I scarcely expected there would be any occasion for striving against the bad effects of praise. Let me be very grateful for my success, and let it stimulate me to future exertions; at least let it prevent me from being unnecessarily cast down.”

With respect to his *reading*, during the years of theological study, its range may not have been so extensive as that of many other candidates for the ministry. He was at considerable pains, however, to improve for this purpose the leisure he did possess. He also listened to the advice of friends relative to the books he should peruse, and whatever he read it was his endeavour to understand and digest. We formerly adverted to his veneration for the Scriptures as the supreme and decisive standard of faith, and to the pious feelings he cherished in the perusal both of that sacred volume and of human writings. His attention to the improvement of his mind will still farther appear from the following extracts:—

In a letter addressed to a relative, the first winter after his entrance on the study of theology, he says—“As for my reading, I have tasted a little of *Marckii Medulla*. I have also read some sermons of Boston’s and Ebenezer Erskine’s, and also Dr Dick’s Essay on the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

I have not yet ventured on Hervey's Dialogues, but expect to do so soon. I have tried to read, when time would at all permit, a little both of the Old and New Testaments in the originals. I am finishing Melville's Life, which has been to me, between hands, what Mr Brown calls a 'very good relaxation.' I have still Baxter's Reformed Pastor." A letter to his uncle W——, dated April 16, 1825, contains the following statement :—" You will expect to hear something of my studies. I have delivered my lecture to the Presbytery ; it was on 1 Pet. i. 1, 2. I have begun a critical exercise for the Hall, on 1 Cor. i. 21. I have also written this winter two sermons on Col. iii. 17, and one on Isaiah xlv. 22. I read a verse or two of the Hebrew Psalter, and a little Greek daily. I have not much time left for reading a great deal of English divinity. I am at present reading Witsius on the Creed." In winter 1826, he gives the following account to another uncle :—" I was not disappointed in reading Hurd on Prophecy, and intend to peruse it again. I am reading Horne's Introduction, and Mr Andrew Swanston's Discourses. I have also been paying some attention to my Hall discourse, and have been jotting down, now and then, short notes on various texts. Henry Martyn's Memoir, Michael Bruce's Poems, and Alison on Taste, have occupied, or still occupy, the most of my hours for relaxation." To these particulars it may be added, that in a list of the books which he at one time obtained from the Students' Library for perusal in the country, he includes *Calvini Institutiones*, with Mosheim's Commentaries, and Remains of Christian Antiquity.

His decision of mind regarding the honourable but arduous profession he had chosen, seems to have increased with his years; and the near approach of the period when he was expected to become a preacher of the gospel, roused him to greater ardour and activity in study. In November 1825, after mentioning a certain young preacher he had just heard, and who, in conversation with him, had complained very much of the fatigue of public speaking, he adds:—"This ought certainly to excite me to see that I have pure and strong motives for entering on the work of the ministry, but ought not, I think, to deter me from it. Woe be to me, if ever I draw back from unwillingness to suffer fatigue, or even worse, for the name of the Lord Jesus! J—— gave me Martyn's Memoirs in loan. My spirit stirs within me while I read the holy breathings of Henry's soul." A letter to a friend, of nearly the same date, contains the following characteristical passage:—"I am in every respect enjoying considerable happiness. I am happy in my teaching—happy in my studies—happy in my friends—and happy also, in some measure, in viewing myself as not my own, but bought with a price, and bound to spend my life, whether it be short or prolonged, in the service of the great Emmanuel. I am reading Henry Martyn with next to an excessive interest, and am trying to follow, though at a great distance indeed, the steps of his zeal and love. I was struck, in the course of my reading this admirable book, with my past indolence, and resolved to make every effort, in the strength of grace, to shake it off. The term of my studies at the Hall is within twenty-two

months of its conclusion, and therefore I find there is the most absolute necessity for making every thing else give way to the following important objects—*personal religion, English theological reading, English composition, and the critical study of the Scriptures.* I have divided my time among these as well as I can, and hope, through the Divine blessing, to make something like a proper improvement of the few precious moments that remain.”

Amongst the objects that particularly claimed his attention, he here includes *English composition*. Impressed, as he unquestionably was, with the superior importance of the accuracy and vigour of his sentiments, he justly considered the language in which his sentiments were clothed, as entitled to a proportionate share of attention. The aversion he consequently cherished to the use of “hackneyed expressions,” was almost fastidious. “There is one thing,” he says in a letter to a friend, “that ought to be attended to, in writing a letter or any thing else. We ought to avoid hackneyed expressions, and to speak as if never one before us had expressed the same idea in words. (It is very wrong, however, to become stiff or eccentric, through an attempt at originality.) In religious subjects especially, I would recommend variety and vigour of language. When our words are borrowed from others, it is almost impossible the thoughts which they convey should come *fresh* from our own minds, or should make much impression on the minds of others. For my part, I have resolved to avoid that sort of language which is really a dialect by itself, and may be called the theological dialect of

the English tongue, and to use the ordinary intellectual dialect, except when I quote, or allude to, a Scripture expression."

The most devoted student requires occasional relaxation. For the salutary purpose of unbending the mind, he not only shared the pleasures of rational and entertaining conversation with persons of intelligence and piety, but somewhat indulged his natural propensity to cultivate the arts of *music* and *poetry*. Accordingly, he says in his journal: "*Feb.* 10, 1825. Mr W—— of C—— sent his violin to me. Let me beware of indulging to excess my love of music." — "*Feb.* 14. I relaxed myself a little by writing some poetry." — "I have taken your hints," he says also in a letter to an uncle, "about the improvement of the imagination. I have aimed at cultivating this faculty in some measure, by reading, with considerable attention, Cowper's Poems, and by exercising my own hand a little in rhyme. I am afraid lest I become an enthusiast in these studies." His attached relatives and friends were not a little delighted with some short poems of his writing, as one on "The Voice of the Old Year," and another, entitled "A Prayer for Poor Ireland." To exhibit any of his verses, however, to the public eye, would be at least a questionable proceeding, after the strong terms in which he has expressed his own low opinion of their merit. "I am really turning so correct in my taste," says he in a letter to a friend, "that I cannot bear a single line I write, when I attempt to be a poet. I believe there is scarcely a shred of real poetry in all the jingling ware I ever manufactured."

Hitherto we have not particularly adverted to an interesting trait in his character, that was developed at an early stage of his theological curriculum, and which eminently distinguished him to the last, namely, his *missionary spirit*. The proofs, indeed, we have seen of his spiritual benevolence towards children, and also those of riper age, both acquaintances and strangers, and the thrilling interest he felt in the memoirs of Henry Martyn, show that his heart was animated by those principles and feelings which naturally produce a sincere compassion for the heathen, and a desire to advance the cause of Christian missions in pagan lands. The fact is, that he had scarcely been one year a student in divinity, when this subject began very deeply to impress his mind, and to occupy a considerable place in his thoughts and his prayers. —“ Aug. 6, 1824. Read the newspapers, as usual. With how little concern can I read of war, and bloodshed, and murder! Yet I have been led sometimes to pray, when thinking of the revolutions of kingdoms, the mandates of emperors, and the deliberations of cabinet councils, that all these may tend to the gradual extension of the kingdom of my Redeemer, till at last the Prince of Peace shall reign from scorched Africa to frozen Greenland—from polished Europe to the most savage islands of the vast Pacific.” At a subsequent date he says, “ Read the account of the annual meeting of the London Missionary Society with much interest. ‘ O let thy way be known more and more on earth, and thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O Lord; let all the people praise thee.’ ”

The fervour of his missionary zeal induced him even to entertain serious thoughts of sacrificing the comforts of home, and personally undergoing the toils and sufferings of a Christian missionary in a distant country. Although he never proceeded to make an actual offer of his services, it is impossible to read his own account of his feelings and exercises regarding it, without admitting the conviction of his heartfelt attachment to this great cause. We quote the following entries :—

“ *Aug. 15, 1824.*—I recollected that, in the beginning of last week, I had read in the Report of the Scottish Missionary Society, a call to students and preachers to consider whether it might not be their duty to devote themselves to the work of Christian missionaries. I seriously reflected whether this was my duty. Revolving in my mind the arguments on both sides, those which should bind me to my native soil dwindled into insignificance, before the thought of declaring to sinners abroad that name which is above every name. As soon as I arrived at home,” [he was on his way home after the public services of the Lord’s day,] “ I knelt down, and humbly craved the direction of my heavenly Father in this most important question. Let me not decide rashly, however strong I may feel my desire to preach among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ. I must make it the subject of frequent prayer, and of conference with my steadiest and most serious friends. O send out thy light and thy truth ! Guide me by thy counsel.”

“ *August 16.*—Both morning and evening found

it good for me to draw near to God. How shall I conceive of the condescending love of my Father in heaven, who does not spurn from his presence even *me*, but accepts me graciously in the Beloved! I was enabled, I trust by Divine grace, to make such a new surrender of myself wholly to the service of the Lord Jesus, as to be ready to remain in my country, or to go to whatever point of the compass he may direct; and in whatever situation, to spend and be spent in telling sinners that there is a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Prayed earnestly for Divine direction. I think that my interest in the extension of Emmanuel's reign, at home and abroad, has been gradually increasing for some time past.

“ I know of no obstacle, apart from my unworthiness, to my becoming a missionary, except the duty I owe to my dear *dear* mother. O my Mother! could I leave thee, who must soon become a hoary-headed pilgrim, to go on without the youthful arm of thy dear John Henry to support thee? Shall I deny myself the melancholy satisfaction of paying the last honours to the best of mothers? Or shall I be denied the soothing hand of my tender parent to minister to me on the bed of death, and calmly to close my lifeless eyelids? Heart-rending thought! Yet if I should be deprived of both these sad gratifications, will that dissolve our union to our never-dying and never-forgetting Friend? No, no. ‘ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?’ A trial of no ordinary magnitude, I am sure, would my departure to a foreign land be to my mother, and my sister, and myself; but if it be the will of my Saviour that

I should depart, he will not allow us to be tried above what we are able to bear, but will, with the temptation, give a way of escape. Let us cast our anchors on the Rock of ages; and then, though stormy billows should roll betwixt us, we shall there have security for meeting soon, *very soon*, in the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. If, however, my dear mother shall absolutely forbid my devoting myself to this glorious work, then undoubtedly I must obey; as MRS NEWELL intended to do, had her mother opposed her departure. Who is sufficient for these things? Lord Jesus, thou art my sufficiency—thou art my all in all.”

He embraced an early opportunity, as might have been expected, of communicating his thoughts on this momentous subject to Mr Brown. In a letter to this worthy minister, dated Glasgow, Sept. 9, 1824, after stating the circumstances that had led him to ponder the question, “Is it my duty to offer myself as a missionary to the heathen?” and alluding to the importance of mature deliberation and earnest prayer, as well as asking the advice of friends, he assigns reasons for delaying to consult his relations till he should hear *his* opinion, and continues thus:—“Arguing from the affection with which you have always treated me, and from the lively interest you take in the affairs of Zion, I have no reason to fear your thinking me obtrusive, when I request your counsel in the present crisis. So far as I can conceive of the feelings of a son towards a father, I do it with filial respect and confidence. Perhaps it will be necessary, before you offer any definite advice, that you should

be more fully acquainted with the state of my mind with respect to this matter. I shall be better able to inform you on this head, by answering your inquiries, than by giving you at once a general account of it. I may say, however, that I am endeavouring to aim at a simple and cheerful devotedness to the service of the Redeemer, whether he see fit to employ me in my native country or in a strange land. Above all, as what I need most is the instruction of my Father in heaven, I hope you will plead before his throne of grace, that I may have an unction from the Holy One, and, living or dying, may be the Lord's."

To this letter the following prudent and affectionate reply was returned:—

" WHITBURN, *Sept. 25, 1824.*

" MY VERY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Yours I received two weeks ago ; but as I immediately went to the Synod, I could not answer it. Your kind and filial respect I highly and tenderly regard, and hope to act as a father to you, since God so early deprived you of a kind and worthy father. I think you have acted very properly in seriously considering the matter, and also in setting apart some time for prayer with respect to it. * * * When I turn it over in my mind, I think your entire devotedness to the Redeemer fits you, in some measure, to be a missionary ; but I think with respect to bodily strength, and some other things I will mention when I see you, there may be hinderances. As you are so young, I think a considerable time may be usefully spent by you in most deliberately considering the matter. I will with pleasure set apart some time to

pray about it, and we will talk it over by ourselves. I think also you should at least attend another year with the Professor, before you finally determine on the matter. Wishing you all grace from the Lord Jesus to fit you for whatever is his will with respect to you—I am, my very dear friend, yours,

JOHN BROWN.”

The following memorandum of what passed betwixt Mr Brown and his young friend on this subject at his own house at Longridge, about two months after the date of this letter, is quite characteristical : —“ Mr Brown took me aside for a few minutes, and in his kind warm manner addressed me to the following purpose :—‘ Now, I am much obliged to you for telling me about *yon*, (the missionary question,) and I wish you aye to tell me of any thing that troubles you—any uneasiness you have ; and I hope you’ll not forget me at home. Good-night ; farewell, my dear boy.’ I cannot receive such kindness from this venerable servant of Christ, without feeling that it is *really* too much for me, who deserve so little.”

He thought proper to address letters on the same weighty topic, and of nearly the same date, to his uncles, from whom he received similar answers. Whilst they commended his zeal, they earnestly advised him to guard against a precipitate decision, and at least to complete the usual course of theological study. In this counsel he calmly acquiesced, and amidst all his deliberations he discovered an amiable delicacy to the feelings of his mother and sister. In December 1826, he writes in his journal, that after

having conversed on this point with his mother at Auchtermuchty more particularly than he had previously done, he came to this resolution :—" Providence does not call upon me to *determine* on going abroad, and therefore it is my duty to pay chief attention to those studies that are most likely to qualify me for the work of a home pastor, although still resolved to go wherever Christ shall be pleased to send me."

His letters to his sister on this subject are too interesting, to be wholly omitted. The following specimen is extracted from one bearing date April 1827 :—" You tell J—— that you have got free of certain fears you had formerly mentioned to her. If I may guess at these, I was the subject of them. What did you fear, my dearest Mary? That your brother would leave all and follow Christ? That he would be honoured as the messenger of eternal truth and unalterable love to the ignorant perishing heathen? Were you afraid lest by cheerfully parting with him for the sake of that Redeemer who bought you with his blood, you would 'receive in this life an hundred-fold, and in the world to come life everlasting?' Ought these things to excite fear in a Christian mind? I know your fears proceed from affection to me, but I must reprove them, inasmuch as they are inconsistent with that degree of affection you owe to your Saviour. I entreat you to examine your own heart, and see if your love to me be not idolatrous. O try solemnly, and in the strength of the Lord Jesus, to resolve willingly to part with me, if he should call me away from you. I wish you

fully to understand, that even though I should be called and ordained at home, I would not by any means keep foreign service out of view, unless my health or some other circumstance absolutely bind me to my native land. These are my resolutions, and I trust you will not only avoid every thing that might tend to weaken them, but that you will strengthen them as much as you can by your prayers. I did not speak of the subject at first to grieve you, nor do I now again introduce it, that you may have 'sorrow upon sorrow.' Do I need to tell you so? I speak of it, because it is a subject which ought to kindle our souls into a flame of Divine love, not to overwhelm them with grief. We ought to be happy in each other, just in proportion as we see each other devoted to the Redeemer, and growing like him. What a poor enjoyment is ordinary friendly intercourse, in comparison of that interchange of affection which increases with the progress of the soul towards the character of God!"

While the advices of friends, and the considerations they suggested, induced him to postpone his determination relative to missionary service in a foreign land, he seized every opportunity of promoting among Christians at home a spirit of zeal for the diffusion of the Scriptures and the Gospel. We find from his memoranda that he delivered speeches at meetings of Bible and Missionary Societies, held at Longridge, Midcalder, Kennoway, and several other places. He felt anxious, in particular, to see his fellow-students richly imbued with a missionary

spirit ; and few discovered greater activity than he in devising and supporting measures calculated to fan this noble flame. In September 1824, he says in a letter to a relative :—"The students have formed themselves into a Missionary Society. There was a general meeting held to-day for dividing the funds. It was agreed to divide them equally between the Scottish Missionary Society and the Highland Missionary Society. I hope this will be the means of exciting some zeal amongst us in the best of causes, in which I really think we are very deficient. Our missionary students have been very active in this affair. They seem to be very devoted young men, and to be very diligent in the prosecution of their studies." His journal also contains the following notices on this topic :—

"*Glasgow, Sept. 3, 1826.*—Having been chosen secretary both to the Student's Society for prayer, and to the Missionary Society, I desire now to give myself up, as holding these offices, and as a student of the Bible, and as a redeemed sinner, to thee, my blessed Lord. I do not deserve thy favour, but to whom shall I go ? Thou, Divine Saviour, art my all in all." —"*Sept. 22.* Read an address to the Students' Missionary Prayer Meeting. My object was to impress on my fellow-students the obligations under which we are, to revolve the question in our minds, 'Ought we to offer ourselves as missionaries?' and to suggest things worthy of attention, in answering this question. I went with Mr L—— to his lodgings that same evening, to read a Hebrew chapter along with him, so that we had an opportunity of talking

over the interesting subject. The evening before, I had conversed upon it with Mr P——, and then with Mr C——. Next morning I met with Mr B——, whom, to my delighted surprise, I found to be deeply imbued with a missionary spirit. I have determined to make him an intimate friend."

In his journal he records the fact, that, during the session 1827, a "Missionary Library was instituted in connexion with the Hall Missionary Society." From part of his epistolary correspondence, too, it appears that he was both active and successful in persuading some of his friends to make contributions for this library. In a letter of thanks to one of them, he says, "Be assured I will not publish your names. Perhaps we may serve the missionary cause most effectually in this way. May we not expect that God will bless such publications, to the kindling of a heroic Christian spirit in our Hall, that may send some of the students to the ends of the earth with the everlasting gospel, and make those of them who shall remain at home laborious, zealous, and faithful. If we put our trust in the Lord, the expectation is rational." In another communication addressed to the same correspondent, dated *July* 14, 1827, he adverts to a donation of missionary works, considerably given by the committee of the Scottish Missionary Society to the Association of Dr Dick's students for religious purposes, and then proceeds to mention his own intentions thus:—"Since this is to be my last year at the Hall, I wish to make myself as useful as possible in exciting a missionary spirit among my fellow-students. But I speak perhaps too sanguinely, forget-

ting that my resolution may waver after I go to Glasgow, and see full in the face the difficulties that will beset me. I need not put you in mind to pray that Christ's grace may be sufficient for me—that He who finished the work given him to do, would, by perfecting strength in my weakness, enable me to follow his sacred steps. My principal difficulty will be, that the students will answer to all my entreaties, *Go yourself*. I cannot say, you know, ‘*Well, I shall go.*’ But this much, I think, may be said with safety; *I will do what I can to remove the obstacles that oppose my going; and if I find it my duty to go, I shall, by Divine grace, by no means shrink from my duty.*”

From the above extracts, it is evident that he must have cherished a warm attachment to faithful labourers in the missionary field, and that nothing served more to recommend any young man to his esteem, than satisfactory proofs of a truly missionary spirit. This, for example, proved the source of an intimate and lasting friendship betwixt him and the *Rev. Hope Masterton Waddell*, who has now for a series of years distinguished himself as an able and zealous workman in connexion with the Scottish Missionary Society, in the Island of Jamaica. His almost first notice of this interesting individual, in his journal, is expressed in the following terms:—“*Dec. 17, 1826.* There are several circumstances that call for my gratitude. I have formed an acquaintance with Hope M. Waddell, a missionary student, with whom I have just been conversing about the things of God. It is most delightful to see a character possessing a

strong Irish peculiarity of complexion, so fully under the influence of religion." Referring to others of a kindred spirit, on Jan. 13, 1827, he says—"It is probable that my dear friend *Watson*, with his brother missionary *Chamberlain*, sailed from Greenock to-day. O thou who rulest the winds and the waves, do thou protect them, and bring them to their desired haven!"

Promising candidates for the ministry of the gospel, whether at home or abroad, were the objects of his very affectionate regard, and devoutly remembered at the throne of grace. Such were his feelings towards a young man, who for several years had occupied the same lodging with himself, first in Edinburgh, and afterwards in Glasgow. "Mr W——," says he in 1825, "left Glasgow, not without my earnest wishes and prayers for his safety, and happiness, and usefulness." How tenderly he concerned himself also in the welfare of a relative who became a preacher about two years before him, appears from the following expressions:—"Nov. 20, 1825. A letter from my uncle William contains some interesting information, especially that J——n S——r has been taken on trials for license. O I earnestly wish that my dear cousin may be guided by the Spirit of Christ in the important situation in which he is now placed, and prepared for public usefulness, by experience of the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord."

During the greater part of the years allotted to the study of theology, with the exception of the six or

seven weeks spent annually at Glasgow, he continued to occupy the school at Foldhouse, and to assist Mr Brown in imparting religious instruction to the young. Yet, as he had been at college only three sessions prior to his admission to the Divinity class, and had not studied Natural Philosophy, it was necessary, according to the regulations observed by the United Associate Synod, that he should attend the University another session, before receiving license to preach the gospel. His attention was therefore turned to this matter in summer 1826, and, after deliberation, he came to the conclusion that it would be right for him finally to give up his school at the next autumn vacation, and to proceed to the study of Philosophy the winter immediately following, being that preceding his fifth and last session at the Divinity Hall.

Conformably to this resolution, a short time after the close of his fourth session, he took up his residence in Edinburgh, where he remained till the end of July. He says, accordingly, in his journal:—“*Oct. 9, 1826.* I am now lodged with ——, and being near my friends at G——, I feel very much at home. O Father of mercies, let this little apartment in which I now am, be made by thy presence a Bethel, such as I found my lonely habitation at Foldhouse during the past year.” During this session he not only heard the lectures of the celebrated Professor Leslie on Natural Philosophy, but again attended the senior Greek class, and a private class for Hebrew. At this time, too, he gladly availed himself of Dr Brown’s valuable instructions to a number of students whom that active minister of Christ met with from week to week, for

the purpose of forwarding their improvement in a critical acquaintance with the Scriptures. He also joined a theological society, that met every Saturday for mutual instruction and excitement. Alluding to the studies of this winter, in a letter addressed to an uncle, of date March 10, 1827, he expresses himself as follows:—"I can only give you a few general remarks. I trust the Natural Philosophy has not been altogether useless to me; though I must confess, had I been a better mathematician, I would have understood the subject far better than I do. With respect to the Greek, I am sensible of some improvement. I can study the New Testament with more advantage than formerly, though not nearly with such success as I should wish. I am reading at present both the Old and the New Testaments in the original, and writing explanatory notes, and difficulties that occur to me, but which I am at the time unable to solve. I have already told you, I believe, that I think the students' theological class a very useful institution. I make a point to criticise almost every production that is read, and to speak also on the question discussed, if I have any thing at all to say about it. Our questions are all connected with a passage of Scripture. Mr Brown's class met last night, and read the 9th chapter of John. We heard a lecture from Mr Brown on Romans x. 5, and some of the following verses, and an exercise from a student on these words, 'Every man shall bear his own burden.' I shall probably read next week. My text is, 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.'"

In a letter to his mother, bearing date April 27,

1827, he gives the substance of an interesting address by Dr Brown to this class of students, which, we trust, may be here recorded without impropriety. The extract runs thus :—" After thanking the Friday class last week for a present we had given him, he spoke nearly as follows :—' I do not think I deserve such a mark of your gratitude and esteem ; for, I must say, the pleasure I myself derive from our meetings is one principal reason that makes me value them. With respect to yourselves, the benefit arises not so much from any instruction you may get here, as from your minds being directed to a particular kind of study—the critical study of the Scriptures. I look back with pleasure on an advice I got, while a boy at college, from Dr Charles Stuart, in reference to this. I did not then pay much attention to it, nor did I discover its value until after I had been several years a minister. I found by experience that he who wishes to labour for the good of others, either with pleasure or success, should derive his theological views *immediately* from the Bible. I for the first time set myself in earnest to the careful study of the Scriptures ; and I can assure you that no study has ever afforded me so much satisfaction. In studying the Bible for himself, one's mind is, if I may so speak, brought into close contact with the mind of God.' "

He adverts repeatedly in his Diary to Dr Brown's public discourses—his delight in hearing them—and the impressions they made upon his mind. Let two examples suffice :—" *Oct. 9, 1826.* Yesterday week heard Mr John Brown, who lectured in the forenoon, Heb. i. 2, and preached in the afternoon from these

words, 'Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy.' Let it be my ambition, in the composition of my discourses, to imitate Mr Brown's simple, nervous, and impressive manner of exhibiting Divine truth to sinful men."—"Dec. 17. Last Sabbath Mr John Brown preached a funeral sermon for the venerable DR HALL, who died in the firm faith of those blessed truths which he proclaimed to others in such a sweet and edifying manner. Some of his last sayings were these:—"Lord Jesus, where and when thou wilt, I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c. Mr Brown's forenoon text was, 'Come, see the place where the Lord lay;' and in the afternoon he preached from that part of our Lord's intercessory prayer, 'Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am.'"

In several confidential letters he wrote during this winter, he complains of comparative distance from God. "I do not hold," says he, "such real communion with *Him* here, as I was blessed with in my room, and during my solitary walks, at Foldhouse." It is evident, however, that the tone of his mind was still decidedly spiritual; that he was sincerely desirous of communion with his heavenly Father, and that he conscientiously improved the means of subduing sin, and making advances in conformity to the Saviour's image. This, in some degree, appears from the manner in which he continued to examine his own heart and ways, and to pour out his earnest prayers to God in the immediate prospect of the Lord's Supper, and after the conclusion of that sacred

feast. The following memoranda supply a useful specimen of these pious engagements :—

“ *Nov. 9, Thursday, 1826.* This day was observed as a fast, in the view of the Lord’s Supper on Sabbath first. *Mr Thomas Brown** preached in Rose Street from 1 Pet. i. 14, and Psalm iv. 6. My hard heart would not receive a single impression. In the evening, however, my heart was somewhat drawn out to God in prayer and self-examination. I began with interrogating myself as to my belief in the inspiration of the Bible, and endeavoured to go regularly over the plan of mercy there revealed, inquiring into the effect each part of it has produced in me. I am satisfied God has shown me mercy, though I have much reason indeed to cry, ‘Help my unbelief; give me some love to thee; and purge away my sin.’ Read the first six chapters of the Gospel of John, with this simple object in view, to know something of the Saviour. I have seldom felt so much the benefit of calm self-inquiry. O Lord, enable me to be more attentive in future to this most important and most profitable duty.”

“ *Nov. 12, Sabbath evening.*—In the retrospect of this day, I have much need to mingle together gratitude, penitence, and supplication. I have much reason for *gratitude*, because I have heard a very clear statement of the manner in which God is just, while he justifies ungodly sinners like me, and because Jesus Christ has been set before me crucified

* The late Rev. Thomas Brown, D.D., Dalkeith.

and slain, in the memorials he himself has appointed. Although my conceptions have been dark, and my feelings languid, and though, in consequence of this darkness and languor, I have not had a very bright view of the King in his beauty, nor felt my soul burning within me in love to him; yet I *have* seen him, and have some desire to see him again, and to see him better. I have not been permitted altogether to forget the Lord that bought me. The Saviour has been revealed to me in the endearing relation of brother and friend. Yea, I have felt myself called upon, in infinite mercy, to address and depend upon him as my Father, and as the guide of my youth. These are some of the mercies for which I ought to be grateful. ‘Bless the Lord, then, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.’ But I have cause of *penitence*, as well as thanksgiving. Divine truth has not engaged my attention very closely. The great subject of it has not had the undivided throne of my affections. I have felt little amazement at the wonders of redeeming mercy. Sin has not appeared so very horrible to me as it surely must be, whether I see it to be so or not. I have not been much influenced by a solemn sense of the Divine presence. Idle and wicked thoughts have passed and repassed through my mind. I have often used the accents of praise and the attitude of supplication, without singing with the heart or praying with the spirit. These are *some* of the sins of this one day, and they are aggravated by their being committed while the Saviour was *visibly* before my eyes. After coming home, the first petition I could address

at the throne of grace was, ‘ Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant.’ How much need have I, too, for *supplication*, along with thanksgiving and confession. O that I may be wholly God’s, in soul and in body, in thought, in affection, in will, and in action, that *in every thing* I may acknowledge my Father in heaven, and that he may keep me in the right path, upholding my goings that my footsteps may not slide. Let these be the blessings for which I daily and hourly plead. Pour on me the Spirit of grace and supplications.”

Here it should not be omitted, that while, during his stay in Edinburgh, the company of several fellow-students in divinity afforded him peculiar delight, he discovered a concern to reap benefit from them, not merely as a theological scholar, but also as a Christian. He took sweet counsel with them, in reference to the most effectual means of promoting progress in holiness. Agreeably to the suggestion of one of them, he determined “ to make a solemn covenant with God, and to renew it every morning and evening ;” while he adds—“ But since all means are weak, because opposed by *desperate* wickedness, I desire, O Almighty Father, to make use of this one, deeply convinced of the necessity of thy blessing, in order to render it successful in any degree. He then subjoins a series of pious resolutions, which are expressed as follows :—

“ *Dec. 17, 1826, Monday morning.*—I entreat thee, O Lord, to enable me to observe the following RESOLUTIONS :—

“ 1. That I will take God in Christ, the God of my fathers, as my father, and the guide of my youth.

“ 2. That, as all the evils in my heart arise from faintness of conception and belief with respect to the Divine character, I will every morning and evening read a portion of the Scriptures, with this object expressly in view, that I may know more of the glory of God in the face of Jesus ; and will at those seasons, and at other times, earnestly pray for the illuminating influence of the Spirit of truth, on the ground of my heavenly Father’s gracious offer and promise.

“ 3. That when any idol seems to be usurping the throne in my heart, which is the right only of my King and my God, I will send up an ejaculatory petition for the restoration of my soul ; at the same time endeavouring to turn away my thoughts from the idol to him who is the true God and eternal life.

“ 4. That the slightest licentiousness of thought or desire being destructive of my intellectual energy and of my real happiness, both in time and eternity, and being a most fearful provoking of the Holy One of Israel, a crucifying of the Son of God afresh, and a doing despite to the Spirit of grace, who has already striven against it in my heart, I will endeavour to avoid seeing, or hearing, or reading what would in any way encourage it ; and that if my mind be at any time polluted, I will not rest till I am assured it is washed, and purified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of my God.

“ 5. That I will strive against the workings of pride and self-conceit, and will try to prefer others to myself.

“ 6. That all my studies shall have an ultimate re-

ference to the service of Christ, and shall be carried on in a spirit of dependence on Him.

“7. That I will seize every opportunity of making the Saviour known to sinners, and of speaking of his excellency with his dear saints. I will do every thing in my power to serve every friend of Jesus, chiefly that I may honour Him.

“8. That I will be as careful as possible of precious time, rising at this season of the year as soon as there is sufficient light ; and for this purpose going sooner to bed than I have been doing ; for the morning hours are more valuable than the evening ones. I will endeavour, when I call on a friend, not to spend more time than is necessary with him.

“9. That every day I will think of my mortality, and try to live as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth, looking for a better country, which is a heavenly.

“In the strength of Christ, my all.

“JOHN HENRY GARDNER.

“December 17, 1826.”

These truly good resolutions having been formed “in the strength of Christ,” it is reasonable to hope that they were, on the whole, remembered and carried into effect. Among others, the seventh, which relates to seizing opportunities of diffusing the knowledge of the Saviour, was not forgotten. Amid his efforts to acquire, he was careful to communicate knowledge. About this time, partly to assist in defraying his own necessary expenses, he exerted himself in the capacity of tutor to the son of a gentleman, who was attending the new academy in Edinburgh.

But he also cheerfully embraced opportunities of performing gratuitous services for the spiritual benefit both of the young and the old. Accordingly, another student and he jointly undertook the care of a Sabbath school at *Libberton*, to which he alludes in the following passage of a letter to a friend :—" *Edinburgh, Feb. 7, 1827*. I am happy that I can inform you of the improvement of my Sabbath scholars (at *Libberton*) in their conduct in school. The Sabbath before last, they behaved as well as the *Longridge* ones. I trust God has a purpose of love to execute in reference to some of them. You will agree with me in thinking holiness of heart the most important qualification of a teacher, who would do good to the souls of children. Without this, it is heartless, hopeless work." In compliance, too, with particular request, he gave a word of exhortation, in one instance at least, to a group of aged people inhabiting another village in the vicinity of *Edinburgh*. "On Saturday evening," he says in a letter to a relative, dated April 1827, "I will probably be out at *Swanston*, a village at the foot of *Pentland* hills, where the missionary students deliver addresses to the old people once a-month. They have requested me to officiate next time, which I intend, in reliance on the Divine blessing, to do."

Students in divinity ought to consider well the benefit their own souls may derive from the efforts of spiritual charity, as well as their utility to others. This young man was still able to state that his experience accorded with the inspired proverb, "He that watereth, shall be watered also himself." In a letter

to his mother, alluded to above, after deploring his comparative coldness in religion, he adds, " My Sabbath school however, has, I think, done me some good. O, my dear mother, ask nothing for me but holiness. Having this, I shall, I am sure, want nothing that is good. I must request an interest in your family petitions, as well as the secret devotions of each of you."

He prolonged his stay in Edinburgh, at once discharging the duties of a tutor and improving opportunities of promoting his own advancement in knowledge, till the end of July ; soon after which he went to Glasgow, to attend Dr Dick's theological class for the fifth and last time. The writing of his journal, however, was discontinued for the space of seven months, and not resumed till the 25th October 1827, a few weeks after the close of the session. In the entry of that date he deeply regrets his negligence, and at the same time briefly alludes to the principal occurrences of the interval. Yet we have already seen the spirit and manner in which he acquitted himself at Glasgow during the successive sessions of his curriculum ; and among the few circumstances comprised in that memorandum, we need only notice the auspicious opening of a brotherly correspondence betwixt Dr Dick's students and those of DR THOMSON of Paisley, the learned professor of the Relief Synod :—

" A correspondence with the Relief Hall was opened by a society composing the majority of the students attending our Hall. A deputation was sent consisting of H—— R——, P—— D——, J——

S——, and myself. Other two were appointed, but left Glasgow before the time came. We were very cordially received."

The particulars respecting Mr Gardner's license to preach the Gospel, will fall to be introduced at the beginning of the next period of his life.

PERIOD III.

FROM HIS RECEIVING LICENSE TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TILL
THE TIME OF HIS RESOLVING TO ACCEPT THE CALL TO
WHITHORN.

AFTER serious consideration and earnest prayer, he resolved to preach the Gospel in Scotland, if judged qualified for the work, and with that view to place himself under the superintendence of the United Associate Presbytery of Cupar. Having, therefore, obtained the necessary testimonials, he came to reside within the bounds of that Presbytery, a short while after the termination of his last session at the Hall.

A letter which he wrote to an uncle, dated Auchtermuchty, 11th October 1827, serves to indicate the state of his mind at this interesting juncture. Having adverted to the gratification he had derived from recent interviews with relatives and friends in a variety of places, and to the delight he now felt "at the idea of settling for some considerable time at the home of my earlier years, and among those who are, and have always been, so dear to me," he thus continues :—

"For this winter I have certainly before me the prospect of very peculiar advantages, with regard to opportunities for study. Having no teaching to attend to, it will be my chief business, and will not, besides, be liable to so many interruptions as it would

have been exposed to, had I been residing in Edinburgh. The circumstances in which I am now placed as a candidate for the most exalted office on earth—a herald of the cross of Christ—are so intensely interesting as to excite me, if any thing can, to vigorous and persevering application. I wish I could fully appreciate those advantages, and faithfully improve them. But I know by experience that resolutions are of little avail; nor does even a fair and promising beginning to study, render certain its energetic prosecution and successful termination. To speak the truth to a friend who, while he cannot but blame me severely, will not fail to pray for me, there is a natural indolence about me, which has never been thoroughly subdued—a disposition also to allow the mind to flit from theme to theme, and often to want a serious subject of reflection altogether. Now, if ever, must this indolence be shaken off. What can a listless inactive mind do in the service of Christ? It will only bring dishonour on the Master it professes to serve, and misery upon itself. O that the Spirit of God would give me such a glorious and overwhelming view of that Gospel it is my wish to proclaim, that every thing else may seem trifling and worthless, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, and every exertion of mind, however laborious, seem easy and pleasant, that is made in preparation for the work of the ministry. I shall gladly accept your kind invitation to come to K—— after the Presbytery meets. I look forward with satisfaction to the advantages I may expect to derive from being more retired for a

while than I could be even here, and also from your counsel and assistance."

The same sense of the vast importance of the office to which he aspired, and the necessity of aid from above, is expressed in his reply to another uncle, who invited him to address his congregation at *Alloa*, soon after he should be authorized to preach:—"If it please God," says he, "to allow me to preach the everlasting Gospel, it will certainly give me the highest satisfaction to address the congregations of my two uncles, and also of those other ministers who have shown me peculiar kindness, though not related to me. But, in the mean time, my duty is not so much to anticipate where or when I shall preach, as to ponder the Apostle's question, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' and to labour after experiencing, like him, the grace of the Redeemer sufficient for me, and his strength made perfect in weakness."

The few following memoranda from his Diary tend still further to show how his mind was exercised and impressed at this era of his life, while they include some particulars regarding his appearances before the Presbytery, and succeeding occurrences:—

"*Auchtermuchty*, Oct. 28, 1827.—Finished *The Life of Urquhart*, who died Jan. 10th this year, aged eighteen years and a half. How diligent was he! How ardently and entirely devoted to God, and how ripe for heaven! Well may I blush when I think of the contrast which, in all these respects, there is betwixt *John Urquhart* and me."—" *Kennoway*, Nov. 4, *Sabbath*. Have had more communion with God to-day than I remember of having enjoyed for a long

time. In secret prayer, both in the morning before public worship, and immediately after its conclusion in the evening, I felt in some measure drawn near to God. The part of the public service I most cordially joined in, was the first prayer. I remembered the Redeemer's death over the symbols of his body and blood, not without satisfaction of mind as to his expiation of my guilt, and not without some gratitude and self-dedication to him ; though, alas ! with a coldness that ill becomes a redeemed sinner, when the Lamb of God that took away his sin was set before his eyes crucified and slain. Tried to direct my thoughts while at the table to my circumstances as a candidate for the office of an ambassador for Christ. Dr Taylor preached in the evening from Heb. xii. 14, ' Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' Was peculiarly gratified by a clear and practical exhibition of the truth on the all-important subjects of holiness and the way of attaining it."—" *Nov. 7.* With regard to my studies, read the 2d and 3d epistles of John in Greek—part of *Stuart's Letters on the Trinity* ; wrote part of my sermon on 2 Cor. vi. 1."—" *Auchtermuchty, Jan. 25, 1828.* Delivered two of my trial discourses before the Presbytery of Cupar on the first day of the year, along with my fellow-students, Messrs Johnston and John Reid."—" *Kennoway, Feb. 27.* Yesterday I was licensed by the Presbytery of Cupar, along with Mr Johnston, to preach the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. I trust the great Head of the Church has not permitted his servants to come to a decision contrary to his will. If they have done so,

I think my sincere desire is, that he may reverse it. In the mean time I wish to be wholly devoted to his service in the preaching of the cross."—" *March 2, Sabbath.* I have just a little ago retired from the house of God, where I was honoured, unworthy as I am, to speak of the glories of the upper world, from Rom. viii. 30. Was not much under the influence of terror for the audience ; but, on the other hand, not very much affected by the consideration of the responsibility of the place I occupied. Lord, thou only knowest my imperfection and weakness, and thou only hast grace sufficient for me, and strength to make me perfect."

Thus it appears that, having creditably passed through all the customary exercises, he, with his surviving friend the *Rev. Charles Johnston* of *Monkwearmouth*, was licensed to preach the Gospel on Tuesday, Feb. 26th. On that occasion the *Rev. Peter Taylor* of *Ceres*, moderator, addressed suitable exhortations to the young men. Two months before, also, John Henry received a kind letter from Mr Brown of *Whitburn*, containing a few hints of advice. " My hearty wish," says that venerable man, " is, that the Lord Jesus may be with your spirit. Lay up a considerable number of discourses while you are at home, and this will be useful to you afterwards. Much prayer will fit you for preaching the Gospel, receiving grace thereby from a redeeming God. My son, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Read much of your Bible, and much of Mr Boston, particularly on the covenants, and Witsius on the Creed. All grace be with my very dear friend."

He knew well, in fact, how to value the good wishes and prayers of relatives and friends. A few moments after receiving license, he wrote this hasty note to his sister :—" My dear Mary, I just send you a pencil-written note, to inform you that this day I have been licensed to preach the everlasting Gospel. I request an interest in your prayers on this serious occasion. I write at the table among the ministers, and therefore I can only add that I send my kindest affection to our mother and you." In a letter to an intimate friend, bearing date Auchtermuchty, March 10th, he expresses himself in the following terms:—" I was licensed on the 26th ult. I preached for my uncle in the afternoon of the Sabbath succeeding, from Rom. viii. 30,—‘ Them he also glorified.’ Yesterday I addressed my grandfather’s people from Paul’s account of his preaching, ‘ We preach Christ crucified.’ You will, I doubt not, allow me a special interest in your prayers, now that I have entered on a work of so much difficulty and such awful responsibility as that of a preacher of the Gospel, an ambassador for Christ. A young preacher, you know, is in danger of nothing so much as of forgetting the real object of his office, and making it only an occasion of his gaining the approbation of men, even though he should have no reasonable grounds for expecting a great degree even of this worthless recompense. Pray then that I may be preserved from such a fatal snare. You will wish probably to know how I felt with respect to *the fear of man* in the pulpit. Happily I did not feel this influence me

much. If a large measure of *the fear of God* were substituted in its place, I will do as well without it."

It was not merely at the commencement of his career as a preacher, that he was attentive to the workings of his own heart. Amid the numerous journeys and labours assigned him, and the great diversity of scenes and company through which he passed, we still find him often sitting in judgment on the state and exercise of his own soul, impartially reviewing the manner in which his official duties were performed, lamenting his deficiencies and faults, looking upwards for direction, strength, and success, cheerfully submissive to an all-wise Providence, and cultivating a spirit of gratitude to God and man. It is impossible to describe the circumstances of his mental condition to better advantage than in the language which, at different dates, fell from his own pen:—

"*Ferry-port-on-Craig, March 25, 1828, Tuesday.*
—Preached on Sabbath to *Mr Blair's* congregation, but with little real animation or feeling. Went to Dundee yesterday, and returned to-day. On my return to this place, I found a letter lying for me from my cousin R—— S——, asking me to go to *Liverpool* to preach for six weeks, and then to *Blackburn*. I have written him signifying my willingness to go, unless some very powerful obstacle present itself that I do not know of. May I find that I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me! I have laid down a principle for myself, which I trust I shall be enabled to act on—that I shall never decline

preaching, merely because I am not to be paid for it ; and shall never preach for payment, when I would not have done it *simply for the sake of preaching.*"

" *Liverpool, April 14.*—Preached twice yesterday. Felt the duty much more pleasant than it was last week ; was enabled, especially in the evening, to speak with some degree of animation and earnestness. But oh ! how little love do I feel to that Saviour, whose deeds and sufferings of mercy were the subject of my public addresses. How little communion with him in secret ! How little habitual devotedness to him ! Read on Saturday part of *Owen on Spiritual-mindedness*, and was made to feel ashamed and confounded at the small measure in which I experienced what he describes. When speaking of *spiritual thoughts*, one test he mentions for trying their genuineness is, that when this is their character, they will rise spontaneously in the mind without external impulse or inward force. Now, thoughts quite the opposite of these seem to flow from my heart, as from their native fountain. But I think I do not deceive myself when I say, that I wish holy thoughts and affections were more congenial to my mind."

" *Biggar, August 17.*—Was not so comfortable as last Sabbath previously to going to the pulpit ; yet the grace of God was sufficient for me. He did not leave me entirely to myself in the discharge of my official duties. Still, as always, I must conclude the Sabbath with the prayer of the publican, ' God be merciful to me a sinner.' Strange ! that I have such reluctance to fellowship with God in medita-

tion, in Scripture reading, and in prayer, although I well know how pleasant I find such intercourse with my Father in heaven, when I do sincerely seek and really obtain it. This evening the Spirit of adoption and of prayer wrought upon my heart, and drew me near to the living God. Such communion I feel to be the life of my soul : I am worse than dead when without it."

" *Edinburgh, Sept. 11.—Thursday.* This is my birthday ; and I must not let it pass without some grateful and penitential recollections. I have now completed my twenty-first year in this world of sin and suffering, in which I have done so little to escape its evils myself, or snatch others from them. 'Enter not into judgment with thy servant,' is the prayer which I need every day, but especially on the day which brings a whole year, and the whole past part of my life at once into view. I preached in the evening at Kennoway, on the last Sabbath of August, for the Bible Missionary Society, from Rom. i. 16 ; and though it was with difficulty I wrote the discourse, I delivered it with considerable interest and pleasure. I did not, however, get it all so well finished as I could have wished, having delayed it so long ; which I trust will read me a lesson in future, not to depend upon a single week for a discourse that *must* be ready. This last Sabbath I preached in *Broughton Place*, Edinburgh ; forenoon on the *Shepherds of Bethlehem*, afternoon on Heb. iii. 12 ; which last discourse I then wrote on Saturday with improvements. Though in that large house, and before a great number of my friends who

had never heard me before, I was enabled to speak with presence of mind and some degree of animation. I have been too anxious, however, to hear good opinions expressed of the manner in which I preached. Let me thankfully accept of the encouragement afforded me by a kind Providence, when judicious friends express their approbation; but surely it is not consistent with ‘simplicity and godly sincerity,’ to listen so eagerly to the voice of flattery. Mr dear friend J—— Y—— was so kind as to tell me quietly this evening, a few things which he had observed awkward in my manner of delivery.”

“*Dalkeith, Sept. 26.—Saturday.* Preached at Haddington the Sabbath before last to a vacant congregation. Many of my friends urged me to do my utmost to *make an impression*, in the carnal sense of these words; and certainly the circumstance of their having been just disappointed, was not unfavourable to me. I did feel desirous to make an impression of the kind, but I think too much so. If I believe that Christ is the Head and Ruler of the Church, who appoints every thing in it to the best advantage, and if I acknowledge myself but a servant in that great house over which he presides, it is his prerogative, not mine, to choose the scene of my labours. My business is simply to devote myself to his will and his direction—to do my duty in endeavouring to save sinners by the preaching of the gospel, and prayer for the fulness of the blessing to accompany it.”

“*December 16.—Tuesday.* Left *Inverness* by the coach at three o’clock, and was much disappointed on reaching *Forres*, to learn that *Mr Scott’s* funeral

had taken place that day—a day sooner than was first appointed. Attended the anniversary of Forres Bible Society on Thursday the 18th December. During that week I tried to write a discourse on the subject of Death and Eternity, to preach at Burghhead the Sabbath following; but I found, in making the attempt, that I could scarcely realize these futurities as *true*, or feel them as *important*, and, therefore, how exceedingly unfit I was for pressing them on the attention of others. While I was at Burghhead for a day or two, every thing, especially about Mr Scott's room, and books, and church, seemed to speak of him to me, and to say, *the place that now knows him shall know him no more for ever.*"

"*Banff, May 31, 1829—Sabbath evening.* I have this day finished my engagement with the Banff congregation, which was for five Sabbaths. What is worthy of remembrance with respect to the time I have spent here? First, What *mercies* have I enjoyed? I have had, on the whole, excellent health, without which I could not have possibly gone through the duties that devolved on me from preaching thrice on Sabbath, and visiting the sick through the week; since I had several of my discourses to write after coming here. I have been exceedingly comfortable in my lodgings. Mr and Mrs C—— have treated me with very great friendship, and I shall leave them with no inconsiderable regret. This was another circumstance very essential to the proper discharge of my duties. Had the case been otherwise, I would probably have been much less cheerful; and, of consequence, much less active than I have been. I had,

besides, an opportunity of attending a small praying society, composed of several members of the congregation. The meeting renewed my old feelings, when I used to hold sweet counsel with the plain pious men, who, in the Whitburn congregation, were in the habit of meeting at intervals for mutual edification and united prayer. I ought not to omit my being enabled to write so many new discourses, having composed six, and preached five, during the last four weeks—a much greater task than I ever before accomplished in so short a time. Finally, I have had several opportunities of comforting the afflicted and the sick.

“Secondly, What are the *sins* of the last month? I have to set down at the beginning, here as well as in many other instances, my worldly-mindedness. I have been actuated too much, indeed almost wholly, in what I have done by worldly and selfish considerations. I have tried to write and to preach for God and men’s souls, but my carnal mind has often obtained the victory over my wishes and my resolutions. Indolence has been another sin. I have indeed risen earlier than I had done for a long time past, and frequently taken exercise before breakfast. But I have lost much precious time by indolent reading what I had no business with at the moment—by trifling conversation, when I should have been alone—by torturing my mind with despondent reflexions on my inability for finding proper thoughts and proper illustrations, while I ought rather, trusting in the Divine aid, to have made the best of the ideas and illustrations that suggested themselves. I have been

particularly culpable with respect to committing my discourses to memory. I record it to the praise of the glory of God's grace, that he did not leave me to be entirely confounded before the people, though I apprehended this might be the case. But at the same time I resolve not to make this an encouragement to my slothfulness, which would be 'sinning, that grace may abound.' I ought always to have my writing so well forwarded that there may be time for committing fully; for when I have delayed so long that there has been no time for correcting what was composed, I have found it next to impossible to *mandate*, owing to the want of coherence so often occurring in the style. Alas! I have here, as well as every where else I have been, neglected many opportunities of doing good, that will never return. O my God, clear my soul from blood-guiltiness, the blood of souls. Purge me thoroughly from mine iniquity; cleanse me from my sin. Create also a clean heart, O God; renew within me a settled spirit. I now commend the people here to thee and to the word of thy grace. I beseech thee also to take me, thy insignificant worthless servant, under thy protection. In all places, whither I go, go thou with me, O my father's God."

"*Peebles, Sabbath evening, Oct. 4.*—Yesterday, having been invited to spend an hour or two with *Mr Thomson*, a young Relief minister just settled here, and *Mr M'Dermid* of the same Synod from Paisley, I endeavoured to regard them as brethren in Christ, and to wish them God-speed; and in public prayer to-day I was enabled to give utterance to what

I have reason to believe was not an insincere affection for these, and all other disciples of Christ of a different denomination from ourselves. To-day I lectured from John xiv. 1,—and preached on Rom. viii. 30. To both, there was considerable attention paid by the congregation. Let me not be proud on this account, as if I could attribute it to any excellence in myself or my discourses; for how much is there in both to provoke God to relinquish both the people and me to drowsiness and inattention? While I was preaching, the thought often suggested itself, what are the people thinking? and after I left the church, I had extreme difficulty in repressing sentiments of pride and self-exaltation. I look upon such thoughts as a vile attempt to share the glory with God, as a most profane perversion of the awful subjects of religion to the sordid purposes of a selfish ambition. Instead of indulging these thoughts for a moment, let me rather weep bitterly over my deplorable want of spirituality in my own soul, (for though I was more spiritual to-day than is usual with me, yet all the spirituality I had was scarcely worthy the name,) and over my want of compassion for the souls of others. I have hitherto been unwilling to give up my indolence and sacrifice my comfort, my mistaken comfort, for the sake of saving myself and them that hear me. Let me give the Lord no rest, till he come down like rain on the mown grass, and as the showers that water the earth, and descend as the dew upon my withered and languid powers. My soul cleaveth to the dust—O quicken me!"

“ *Peebles, Sept. 26.*—I was called away, while writing the reflections proper to my *birthday*. But after returning to my room, I solemnly set myself to consider my character and my ways, and especially to inquire whether I be a Christian, and if so, what is my standing, and what are my attainments? On the whole, my conclusion was, that God has begun a good work in me, although its progress hitherto has been slow, irregular, and inconsiderable. I tried to simplify the question as much as possible, that I might bend the whole power of my self-observation in some one direction. A Christian, I reflected, is one in favour with God. God is infinitely kind, and wise, and powerful; and therefore if he receive any one into his favour, he will communicate to him the largest share of the best happiness his nature can receive. The only true and permanent happiness of an immortal, is to be one with the Eternal, to enjoy communion with him, and (what is indispensable to such communion, even were it not of unspeakable importance for its own sake) to have his will and his character fully and cheerfully subordinated to the will and character of God. It was this subordination that I made the particular subject of inquiry. Is there any such thing apparent at all in me? Is it habitual? Though resisted by depraved principles and passions, is there a struggle maintained in my soul on its behalf?”

“ *Inverary, Feb. 28, 1830—Sabbath evening.*—In the forenoon there were only twenty people present, which made me feel very uncomfortable, not so much on account of the carelessness which it mani-

fested about the privileges of the Sabbath, as on account of the difficulty which I always feel in addressing a set discourse to so small an audience. In the evening, the room was, as usual, perfectly full, and the people attentive. I preached with more life and ease than I could have expected.

“ It is a year past on the twentieth of this month since my [paternal] grandmother’s death. During that year, I cannot discern any progress I have made in following her and others, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. To the exhortation to follow such, is prefixed this other exhortation—‘ Be not slothful.’ Sloth has characterised every thing I have done, and no wonder then I do not make progress in religion. It is two years on Friday since I was licensed to preach the gospel, and this is another anniversary that affords much reason for solemn and painful reflection. That I have made some considerable improvement in the manner of discharging, at least outwardly, the duties of my office as a preacher of the gospel of Christ, is palpable to myself and to others ; but this does not reflect so much honour on me for what I now am, as disgrace that I was not such, or far better, from the beginning. Besides, how little have I done ! How few discourses have I written and preached during these two years ! When I think of any other means of doing good I have availed myself of, they seem to amount almost to nothing. I believe that my not having yet procured a call to the ministry, is a thing appointed by Him who does all things well ; but I must regard it, at the same time, as the natural effect of my remissness in the

discharge of my duty. If God shall spare me another year in his vineyard, or how he shall dispose of me if he should, is more than I can foresee. But let me, at all events, as a steward of the mysteries of God, be *found more faithful*. Let me turn out the talents my Lord has given me, and occupy them in whatever way his Providence shall direct, ever looking for and hasting unto his coming. And inasmuch as *weakness* in my sentiments, my affections, my resolutions, my conduct, has been at the bottom of all my unfruitfulness and all my sin, I desire, before going to rest, to abase myself before God and deplore my inefficiency, and earnestly beseech him to make me 'strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.'

"*Inverary, March 5th.*—Bless the Lord, O my soul. He has in some measure healed my backslidings, and loved me freely. * * * I got better on with my writing than I had done for some days. One part of my sermon on repentance, that namely which relates to those who are very unsteady and fickle in their resolutions and amendments, I wrote with tears, because it was precisely my own case. I could not refrain from speaking of it though it condemned myself, because I must declare the whole counsel of God, though I should only thereby show myself the greater a transgressor. But may God bless these observations to myself, first of all. May sin be condemned in my flesh, crucified with Christ, that the old man may be destroyed. O give steadiness and strength to this weak and wavering mind. Stablish, strengthen, settle it. This is a prayer which, above all others, I need to offer up. The spirit of

prayer has been more habitual with me to-day than formerly; at least I have been more frequently in the attitude of devotion. Let me bless the Lord who restoreth my soul, and doth not permit me to forsake him utterly."

"*Shapinshay, July 24.*—Came here last night. Had a very pleasant sail of an hour. The people whom I have seen are very attentive. O that I could prize more the kindness which is done me for Christ and the Gospel's sake! I feel that I am but ill suited for occupying such a station—deficient in ardour, in compassion for perishing souls, in simplicity of object, in firmness of resolution, in humility as to myself, and at the same time in courage as to my office and work, as an ambassador of Christ. I want, too, an ability for readily putting together, in a plain and interesting and impressive form, such elementary and practical truths as are best suited to the condition of the people here. I want, above all, purity and sincerity of heart. Had I more of these two last qualities, I should have more of all the rest. May my Divine Master pity the perishing souls here, and his hungering and thirsting people, and qualify his weak and unworthy servant, as he sees he needs. Though I am compassed with infirmities, yet may this not impede the word of God, but only afford an opportunity for showing that the excellency of the power is not of man but of Him—for the power of Christ to rest upon me."—" *July 28.* Yesterday I visited the new meeting-house which is building here. It seems getting on very fast. May the Lord build the house, else they shall labour in vain that build it.

May he countenance his poor people in this island, whose hearts he has already opened to make such efforts and sacrifices for the sake of his gospel. Last evening I called for C—— B——, to apologise for my not complying with his invitation to dine with him on Sabbath. I told him frankly the reason, namely, that I wished always, if possible, to keep my lodgings on that day. He very politely said that he ought rather to make the apology, but that he supposed I intended leaving the island so soon that he might not see me afterwards."

Sanda, Aug. 29.—When last I addressed the throne of mercy, I think I remembered my mother and sister, and other friends, with sincere desires for their spiritual welfare. But I can never dwell long on my friends, without my prayers reverting with new earnestness to my own necessities, which seem so overwhelmingly superior. It might be an interesting and important question, whether this be a natural effect of prayer for others, or be only the result of selfishness. I should think it the former, provided the heart still glows with an ardent affection towards those who have been the subjects of the intercessory petitions we have been offering up. Nor is it selfishness to regard our own salvation and sanctification as our first and great work, and that which, comparatively speaking, it is wholly within our own power to effect. May God make me more in earnest about this work in the first instance, and I have no doubt I shall then be disposed and strengthened to teach other transgressors his ways, that sinners may be converted unto him."—" *Aug. 30.* At family

worship I was rather more spiritual than yesterday. Yet while reading the Scriptures, I was frequently thinking of the tones of my voice, and mode of pronouncing. * * * I have chosen for a subject of reflection and a principle of action this day, 'Our sufficiency is of God,' and have already felt some benefit arising from having such a passage as a rallying point for the thoughts and resolutions."

"*Kirkwall, Sep. 13.*—Saturday was my *birthday*. I retired for a little this evening, for the purpose of thanking God for all his mercies of which I have been partaker from the womb until now, imploring his guidance and favour in future. I must not forget to take a more minute and serious survey of the past, the present, and the future."—" *Sep. 20, Monday evening.* The solemn review of myself and all that is most important to me, I am only now about to take. It is twenty-three years since I was born into the present world, with the germ of all those powers and capacities which are indispensable to accountable acting and to rational happiness, and which, if rightly improved and developed, are susceptible of being the instrument of the noblest felicity that creatures are capable of, in the world to come. Early was I cast on thy care. Thou who didst care for that helpless and insignificant being I was twenty-three years ago, dost care for me still, when a being with maturer powers, but a being far *less* innocent, and in innumerable ways far less worthy of thy good hand, which thou hast ever kept upon me for good. But while I bless thee for my animal and rational life, and the sustenance of both, and acknowledge the kind-

ness and care that have preserved my health and my soundness amidst many risks to which they were exposed, let me not forget, I beseech thee, that unless I have undergone another birth, I am not thy child, nor an heir of God, and that thou art my Father in no happier or more exalted sense than thou art the Father of all creatures, rational and irrational, holy or fallen. O may the Redeemer's words be engraven on my very heart, while I set myself to these solemn inquiries, and let them ever remain written there, as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' No more shall I be an inhabitant of the pure spiritual world of which God is the light and the centre, whose people are all righteous, a blessed and peculiar people, without this second birth, than I would ever have been an inhabitant of this outward and material world, without being born into it.

"To be born into any new state of existence, is to be furnished with the first radical principles of those various properties which are requisite for living in that state, especially the perceptions, desires, and powers of acting which are suited to its peculiar duties and enjoyments. Have I then those spiritual perceptions, desires, and active powers, which are indispensable to my being a subject of the kingdom of heaven, and to my obeying its laws, and being happily in the possession of its high privileges?

"*First*,—Evidence of my spiritual perceptions. Have I been endowed with any capacity of knowing the things of the Spirit of God, or are they foolish-

ness to me? Now may the Searcher of hearts prevent me from overlooking the real meaning and bearing of this question. It is not, whether I am able to reflect on spiritual subjects, and for intellectually taking rational and connected views of them, which I can explain and defend, and enforce upon the minds of others. Unless, indeed, I were capable of all this (at least the first part of it) in some degree, there would be indisputable evidence, without proceeding further, that I am yet a natural man, and know not the things of the Spirit of God. I would either be stupidly ignorant, or I would be a proud and self-sufficient infidel. But neither of these characters belongs to me. I have not, indeed, that clear, intellectual, well-digested view of Divine truth I ought to have. I have been very indolent, and often very much prejudiced, in reference to religious inquiry. But the object I must keep at present in view, is not so much the *degree* of the qualities I am inquiring about, as the *reality* of their existence in my soul. Doubtless I have a capacity, which has to some extent been improved, for knowing the truth in an intellectual way. Without this, I could not converse about religion; I could not preach about it. This, however, is not spiritual perception. It is a kind of perception of spiritual objects, but it is certainly not in itself a spiritual discernment of them. I might see the most glorious object in the natural world, the sun, and perceive the effects of his influence produced on the whole face of the earth, and know the laws by which these effects are brought about, and might know also that I myself, according

to the same laws, should be undergoing, along with all the objects and beings I behold around, such a powerful action on my outward appearance, and both directly and indirectly on my health and my sustenance in life and comfort. But still all this might be merely the effect of observation and inference. I might be incapable of any direct and immediate feeling of the glorious luminary's power. My mind or body, or both, would, it is true, be manifestly and marvellously disordered, were this the case. But that does not prevent me from conceiving the possibility of such insensitiveness for the sun's light and heat, except so far as I reasoned from the analogy existing betwixt myself and those around me. But what is merely conceivable in a human being, considered merely as an inhabitant of the material world, is the natural malady of every human being, viewed in the light of the spiritual world, until he is born again. The natural man may, and often does know, by means of reasoning, many of the truths of religion ; he can see their connexions with each other, and their bearings on the Divine character and government, and on the state and character and interests of God's rebellious and ruined creatures. Nay, he may even distinctly acknowledge the fact, that he himself is one of that number, and conclude of course that these eternal and momentous truths look in all their importance upon *him*. Still he may not directly feel their presence and their power. The process by which he has come to the conclusion may not have been very intricate, but still it is a *process*. There is no *sense* of the thing. So far as

the most sacred recesses of his soul are concerned, where all the living realities of acknowledged and practical sentiments have their sanctuary, it is almost completely external to his mind.

“ Let me apply this criterion to my own perception of spiritual objects. What I have written [at a previous date] is alas ! too descriptive of the general state of my mind. But if the Spirit of light and truth has at all shined into my understanding, however beclouded it may still remain, I am bound to acknowledge the infinite favour, and not neglect the grace of God that is in me ; which, however far short of that which I need to make me what I ought to be, has made me what I am. If my deceitful heart does not fearfully mislead me, I do know somewhat of seeing and feeling spiritual objects in their excellence and their importance. I have often felt as if I were in contact with the invisible things of eternity. In my meditations on the missionary question, I have frequently, though not always, experienced the same feeling. In adverse circumstances, and amid disappointments, I have seen and acknowledged God’s hand, and perceived that my duty and my privilege was to be wholly at his disposing, in a manner I cannot think I would have perceived all this, except under the enlightening influence of his own Spirit. My discernment is yet very weak and very infantile. *I think as a child* on the things of God ; but I have reason to bless his name there is any evidence that I have such discernment and thought at all.——”

His account of this accurate and searching review

of his own character, seems to break off abruptly. The extracts from his Diary now produced, however, may be deemed an abundantly lengthened exposition of the state of his mind, and of his principles and feelings ; as also, in part, of his external deportment during his career as an itinerant preacher. The impression of his character which these extracts are fitted to give, might be confirmed by various communications with which, in those days, he favoured his relatives and friends. Let a slight specimen here suffice :—

In a letter dated “ Ellon, Nov. 24, 1828,” he thus replies to a sister, who had expressed her solicitude regarding his comfort:—“ Your sympathetic lamentations over my forlorn situation, ‘ far north, an hundred miles ayont the Forth,’ amused me mightily. Be assured you never saw me more cheerful and more at home than I am at this moment. I was in the dumps, it is true, for a day or two at first ; but then, besides being fatigued and indisposed, I did not know the real character of the north. By this time, however, I know there are warm hearts and warm firesides here, as well as in the *kindly south*, (far be it from me to call it else than *kindly*.) Mr M——e, Mr M——h, and Mr S——s, have all treated me with a truly fraternal kindness. May they not in any wise lose their reward !”

A communication to the same relative, written in 1829, shortly after he had been blessed with an opportunity of obeying Christ’s dying command, contains the following passage, which discovers his usual self-inspection and humility :—“ At *Stranraer* I had

very little spirituality of mind in observing the Lord's Supper. What *desperate* hearts we have! They will leave no method untried to shut out from its due influence on our thoughts and our conduct, the love of Him who died for us and rose again. Christ died to condemn sin in the flesh. O that the sentence were put in execution upon me, that my *old man*—all in me that is offensive and hostile to God, and ruinous to my own happiness—were crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth I should not serve sin."

With similar frankness he expresses himself in his letters to his mother, as appears from the three following extracts:—

"*Banff, May 11, 1829.*—I am quite well, and very comfortable. Banff is a most delightful place." After some account of that remarkable town, he adds, "The only difficulty with me arises from being elated and confident after delivering with considerable ease and fluency, which, as might be expected, produces a very different kind of delivery next time. I felt this remarkably yesterday. In the forenoon I lectured with much pleasure and comfort on Luke vii. 18—23, and in the afternoon preached, with no small difficulty, from Acts xi. 26. In the evening, however, I came about a little."

"*Partick, March 12, 1830.*—I have reason to be grateful in looking back on the month I have spent at *Inverary*. On the whole, it seems a promising station. Gradually the Secession is gaining ground. One respectable family after another has been induced to come and judge for themselves; and all,

I have been told, find us something very different from what they expected. Indeed, some of the people were so imprudent in expressing their good opinion, that I could escape the poison of flattery only by reflecting that they were looking for so little, they would have been highly gratified whoever the preacher was, unless he were, according to the verbiage of our own church, decidedly below mediocrity. Mr S—— is to be there for the next month, and I earnestly hope and pray the station may flourish still more abundantly in his hand. Though Paul plant, I know, and Apollos water, God giveth the increase; yet I believe that the ordinary method of the Divine procedure is to work by means of a zeal and activity, corresponding in some degree to the proportion of good to be accomplished. If, therefore, some success has attended my exertions, feeble and cold as, notwithstanding the satisfaction the people themselves showed, I am conscious they have been, there is reason to hope that a still greater fulness of blessing will accompany Mr S——'s labours, which will be so much more abundant and energetic than mine. These things, my dear mother, I say to you, who will give me credit for saying them in the sincerity of my heart. I wish you to join in special gratitude with me for my being enabled to do what I have done, and to implore forgiveness for me that I have not done a great deal more, and done better what I have performed. Though I had done all it was my duty to do, still I would have been an unprofitable servant; and 'who shall stand if thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity?'—if thou shouldest reckon with me

for my defects and weaknesses in the discharge of my duties ?”

“ *St Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldshay, May 28, 1830.*—The Lord's Supper was dispensed here last Sabbath by *Mr Christie of Holm*.^{*} I was his only assistant. There were no week-day sermons, except one on Saturday and one on Monday, both of which I preached, as also the Sabbath evening sermon. Mr Christie did all the rest. He is a very pleasant man. I feel myself much enlivened by meeting with him. I wish I could apply the same remark to communion with that best friend, whose death we were showing forth. Alas! how faintly and coldly do I remember him who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

While, in compliance with the orders of Presbyteries, he prosecuted his labours, sometimes in formed congregations and sometimes at home missionary stations, he nowhere confined himself to the public duties of the Sabbath. He discovered a willingness to do what he could for advancing the best interests of mankind, on any day, and by any eligible means. We find him at one time distributing religious tracts; at another, erecting or encouraging a Sabbath school; and at a third, addressing a Bible and Missionary Association, or taking part in the exercises of a missionary prayer-meeting. He alludes in his journal to the dissemination of tracts at Inverary, and to his

* The Rev. Thomas Christie, now a missionary in Upper Canada.

placing a number on a table in the vessel that conveyed him to Orkney, which were read by most of his fellow-passengers. An attempt to establish a Sabbath school in one of those northern isles, is noticed in the following terms :—

“ *Walls, July 7, 1830.*—Preached on the north side of *Long-Hope* in the forenoon, and at five on the other side ; at both times in the open air, and to attentive audiences, though not very large. At the south side, I announced my intention of establishing a Sabbath school, and immediately began it with fourteen children who were present. I examined them on a passage of Scripture in the hearing of the people, and gave some idea of the plan to be pursued. This is much needed, for the people are very ignorant. May God give it countenance, and accompany it with his Spirit’s teaching.”

Exercises connected with the cause of missions were equally to his taste :—

“ *July 18, 1830.*—Came to *Stromness* by sea on Monday. John Simpson, my dear friend, preached on the Wednesday, which was Mr Stobbs’ fast-day, and a day of the ordination of newly-elected elders, in the forenoon ; and I in the afternoon. Had a missionary prayer-meeting in the evening, which was very pleasing. Interesting extracts from the Moravians’ Report were read, also Mr Waddell’s letter to me, and the translation of the Caffre chief’s hymn on the Saviour, which I heard Dr Philp read in the Assembly Rooms, [Edinburgh.] We all three engaged in prayer. John and I told each other of our faults in preaching. For my part, I hope I shall be

the better for these hints.”—“ *Kirkwall, Aug. 28.* Spoke on Wednesday evening at a meeting of the Bible Society. I got on better than I deserved, or had any reason to expect. The motion I got related to the facilities opened up by the new French Revolution for circulating the Bible in that interesting country.”

Among the various services that claimed his attention during his peregrinations, he cheerfully complied with invitations to visit the sick and the dying. On these occasions he felt a laudable desire to form a correct opinion of their spiritual state, and to converse and pray with them in an appropriate manner, as is manifest from the following extracts :—

“ *Inverary, Feb. 24, 1830.*—Was called after eight o’clock to see an old man, who is apparently dying. He was able to speak a little, but often talked incoherently. From the broken sentences he uttered, I fear (O that my fear may be groundless !) that he has been looking to his good conduct and respectable character for the ground of his hope in the prospect of eternity, and that though he has found himself deficient in the discharge of his duty, he has yet no distinct apprehension of the way of access to God through the atonement of his Son. May I be forgiven, if I have judged erroneously. However, as this seemed, on the whole, the conclusion to be drawn from what he said, I thought it proper to urge on him the utter insufficiency of our best works to recommend us to God ; pointing out to him, at the same time, the all-sufficiency of Christ’s righteous-

ness, and God's readiness to forgive through his atoning blood, and the freeness and earnestness of the invitations addressed to the chief of sinners to come to Christ, that they may be saved. Repeated some of the most plain and striking passages that occurred to me from the word of God on these subjects—prayed with him, and bade him farewell. I bless God that I was enabled to say any thing at all to a dying sinner that was calculated to promote his welfare after death. But, O how little compassion was there in my conversation with him—how little fervency in my prayers for him!"

"*Feb. 26.*—Yesterday forenoon I visited both the old man L—— and the lad C—— M——. Was enabled in both cases to speak a word in season, and with more feeling than I usually speak with. I was but too much confirmed in my opinion of the poor old man's state of mind, in reference to his sins and their forgiveness. He seemed not to know what I meant when I asked him, in various shapes, and as simply as I possibly could express it, if he had any hopes of pardon, and if they were founded solely on the cross of Christ. I have heard to-day that he died at eleven o'clock last night. Of C—— M——'s views, so far as I could see, there was reason to hope well. He expressed his dependence on Christ, and his desire to depart and be with him, where he is. There were no rapturous feelings apparent, but I trust there was 'peace in believing.' His mother said he was now, she thought, reconciled to his departure. He expired at five in the afternoon. O my soul, let these deaths affect me more than they have yet done! How

should I live so forgetful of eternity and so earthly, after hearing of two persons being summoned into the presence of God so very soon after I had conversed and prayed with them."

" *Kirkwall, July 18, 1830.*—When at *Walls*, I twice visited a poor woman who had led a most irregular life. She is confined to bed, and very weak. From all I could see, there is much reason to believe that she is a vessel of mercy, and a true penitent. She wept much when I spoke of Christ's love and other kindred subjects; and, especially during prayer, she appeared often deeply affected with a sense of unworthiness. The most pleasing feature about her is, that she knows the whole of the New Testament from beginning to end. I did not mention a passage but she at once caught the spirit of it, and generally the language, and could evince, by the interest she took in it, that it had been profitable to herself for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or instruction in righteousness. Her views, perhaps, are not very distinct or accurate; her humility, however, seems so deep and sincere, and her confidence in the Saviour such, that whatever may be the confusion of her notions, I cannot but think it will not prevent her from being sanctified through the truth, and filled with joy and peace in believing. There may be much speculative accuracy where there is little practical feeling, and much correct feeling where there is not a very distinct systematic conception of the truth. Christ does not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. It would be to have another mind than that which was in his Master, for a disciple or

servant of Christ to judge harshly in such a case as this. I was somewhat reluctant to go to see this person, from the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed ; and though convinced from the first that it was my duty to visit her, I delayed it for several days longer than I ought. I pray God may forgive my sin in this. I never visited any sick person with more heartfelt satisfaction."

" *Sanda, Aug. 30.*—Visited two sick women. One of them, E—— M——, has been confined for twenty years. She complained of frequent and severe pain in the head, which often prevented her from reflecting. In answer to a question of mine, what she regarded as the foundation of a sinner's hope? she said, that Christ was her only hope ; and answered correctly also when I inquired what Christ hath done for us. I did not get much out of her farther. I do not know whether it is that I have not the proper method of treating sick persons, or whether those I have had occasion to visit have been generally reserved ; but for the most part, whatever be the cause, I cannot ascertain distinctly what are the views they entertain, and the impression these views have made upon their hearts. In some cases I have, I think, understood their state of mind pretty well, but in most, I believe, it has been the reverse with me. This woman, however, said something about her long affliction and God's mercy under it, which led me to think she enjoyed some measure of real consolation under it, and was reaping in some degree the peaceable fruits of righteousness. She said, for example, that she was very weak, yet Christ would not break

the bruised reed. I trust I may say the same thing respecting M—— D——, who, from a prodigious swelling in one side of her throat, can hardly speak a single word so as to be understood. Both appeared much affected, particularly during prayer. O for more tender sympathy for the afflicted, more of that mind which was in Christ Jesus, more deep and experimental views of religion, more ardent zeal for the Saviour's glory in the salvation of immortal souls; and then would I speak with more appropriateness and earnestness, and pray with more fervency and importunity, than I do at the bed of sickness."

All his active endeavours to further the best interests of men, were enhanced by the charm of a good example. From the testimony of others, as well as the tenor of his own statements in the foregoing extracts, we have much cause to conclude, that piety joined with urbanity, gravity and strict sobriety tempered by innocent cheerfulness, an alacrity in introducing or supporting religious and useful conversation, reluctance to complain of the treatment he met with, a friendly disposition towards his fellow-preachers, and, in a word, a care to avoid every semblance of evil, habitually adorned his behaviour wherever he appeared. How sequestered soever the places he might visit, and how obscure soever the circumstances of the people with whom his duty called him to mingle, he showed a uniform solicitude to shun every thing in speech and conduct that might tend to injure the credit of religion, to create unnecessary pain to those around him, to impede the happy fruit of his own labours, or to foster prejudices unfavourable to

the respectability and success of brethren that were to succeed him in the same field of exertion.

The Christian's attention to his own true interest, and his activity in promoting the spiritual welfare of others, are closely allied. The subject of this narrative, from love to the Saviour, and a sense of what he owed to himself, joined to the desire of increasing his capacity for usefulness in the church, conscientiously consulted his own improvement, moral and intellectual. The passages already quoted from his Diary evince his unremitting care, amid his journeys and ministrations, to maintain the discipline of the heart. With what assiduity he profited by the lessons of Providence, and the varied means of advancement in knowledge and holiness to which he had access, is confirmed by similar evidence. Still, as in former years, he cherished those impressions of death and eternity which either personal indisposition, or the afflictions and departure of others, were fitted to make. A troublesome tumour in his tongue, and a successful operation upon it, suggested reflections that ought not to be omitted.

"*June 13, 1829.*—I have for three months past had a sore tongue, which though not giving very much pain, yet has produced no small anxiety. I trust it is nothing dangerous. May it, however, show me, by discovering how easily appalled I am by any appearance of death approaching, the necessity of dying daily, and of finding my happiness in Christ and his service, so that to me to live may be Christ, and to die gain."—" *Gibraltar-House, Edinburgh,*

Sept. 10.—This afternoon I underwent an operation, for the purpose of removing the tumour that has been for some time on my tongue. It was performed by *Mr Syme*, surgeon, in the presence of Doctors Belfrage of Slateford, and Taylor [of Auchtermuchty.] The pain was not very acute, and I did not feel faint in the least after it was over. I thank God for mercifully preventing this complaint from proceeding to any greater height, and that it has so easily been (as I trust it has been) removed. My God, I am in thy hands as the clay. How instantaneously couldst thou infuse some deadly influence into my corporeal frame, polluting all the channels of life, and drinking out its very essence. How easily couldst thou infuse, in a particular part, or spread over the whole surface of my body, some unintermitting and excruciating torment. Bless the Lord, O my soul ! who healest all thy diseases, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and with tender mercies. Alas ! there are maladies in my soul which no operator, however expert, and no adviser, however prudent and experienced, can cure. Mine is not so much ‘ a wounded spirit,’ however, as an enervated, drooping, and corrupted one. My refuge is in ‘ the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.’ Let me now apply with at least the same earnestness for the interposition of the Physician of souls, with which I have desired the advice and the aid of those who heal the body. O my God, let not sin reign in me ; for thy name’s glory help me ; make me steadfast and immovable. May the violent or seductive efforts of depravity within, or temptation without, be checked and

thwarted by the kindly and holy operation of thy good Spirit. He knows my frame ; He knows the symptoms of my spiritual disorder ; He sees the connexion that subsists between them all ; He knows the consequences that will issue from them if left uncured. He is the Spirit of love, of infinite love, and therefore I would commit my helpless soul to his gracious treatment and his omnipotent agency."

The decease of several esteemed ministers gave occasion to the following memorandum :—

" *Kennoway, July 10, 1828.*—The calls of Divine Providence to those who are invested with the office of ambassadors of Christ, are uncommonly frequent and awfully solemn. Several young ministers have been cut off in the very commencement of their career of usefulness—*Mr Marshall* of Kendal, *Mr Gray* of London, and *Mr Brown* of Dunfermline. Others have been removed at a more advanced period of their ministry, such as *Dr Brown* of Dalkeith, *Mr Black* of Haddington, (who died a fortnight after I was there,) *Mr Boucher* of Cumbernauld, and *Mr Bunyan* of Keith. My soul, incline thine ear and hear. Shall thy God expostulate with thee in vain ? Tear, O tear thy affection, however acute the pang that accompanies the separation, from all that entangles thee in the service of God and thy journey to heaven. Lay aside every weight ; run with alacrity and perseverance the race set before thee ; look to Jesus, the author and finisher of thy faith."

In a letter to his sister, dated *Forres, Nov. 22, 1828*, he makes an affecting allusion to the death of the *Rev. Robert Scott* of Burghhead, which perhaps

might have been more happily introduced immediately after an extract from the Diary respecting him quoted above,* but ought on no account to be wholly suppressed. After stating a few particulars regarding the rapid progress of his distemper, and the state of extreme debility to which he found himself reduced, on Saturday Dec. 13th, he adds :—

“ He spoke little or none after this, but seemed to fall into a stupor, which probably abated much the violence of the pain he formerly felt. He breathed out his spirit without a groan or a struggle. There is good reason to hope the Lord Jesus received it. He was much beloved among his people ; and no wonder he should have been so, for his heart was in his work, and simplicity and kindness were the leading features of his demeanour towards all with whom he associated. The sorrow produced by a bereavement so sudden and so awful, you may well suppose, is of no trifling or ordinary nature. *Mr Stark* tried to comfort the congregation by preaching two discourses from our Lord’s words, ‘ Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.’ This day I had fixed some time ago for visiting Mr Scott. But what is our life ? What are all our projects and hopes ? All vapours ; and in this instance how quickly have they all vanished away.”

The reflections that occur in his Journal on the death of his grandmother, are expressed as follows :—

“ On the fourth Sabbath of February 1829, I preached at Montrose. On that day, about an hour and a half before going to church, I received a letter

* Page 126.

from Mary, announcing the death of my dear grandmother, which took place on the Friday morning preceding February 20th. The funeral was appointed to be on the Monday, so that I could not possibly attend. I am conscious I loved my grandmother, and yet I did not feel so keenly on hearing the intelligence of her death as I thought I would. I trust that at least the prominent cause of my feeling less than I would do in some cases, was her extreme old age, united with her happy preparation for the eternal world. The present life had become wearisome, the grasshopper was a burden. Why should we, then, have sorrowed that she was translated to the land of love, the region of health, prosperity, and joy? She has found a Father and Friend; she has seen Him in whom, unseen here, we rejoice; she has mingled with the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; she has inherited the better and enduring substance. Was it not reasonable, then, to moderate our affliction, notwithstanding the loss ourselves sustained. We trust the prayers she so often presented on our behalf are not lost, but kept in remembrance before God, and their answers in store for us in every time of need."

To these pious notices we may subjoin a similar reference to the departure of a young acquaintance, whom he saw cause to esteem as a Christian:

"*South Ronaldshay, May 30.*—I understand that C—— C——'s death was observed in a newspaper the other day. I supposed, before hearing it, that she was no more; or rather I ought to say, that she had gone to that Saviour whose love was constantly

her theme during her last illness. How blessed to feel assured that one's friends are with Christ, which is far better ! O that this death may affect her own family and all her acquaintances as it ought. My dear sister, I trust, will not be unbenefited by it. May we follow her in her simple faith in the Saviour, and her admiration of his mercy."

"Iron sharpeneth iron ; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."* We have seen above the value which John H. Gardner put on the company and advice of esteemed fellow-preachers. At all times he was ready to lend an attentive ear to good counsel. He alludes to a sermon preached by DR HEUGH at the opening of the United Associate Synod, and to exhortations privately addressed to preachers, in the following terms :—

"*Sept.* 10, 1829.—The Synod are meeting this week. Mr Heugh, of Glasgow, preached the sermon ; the text, ' Who is sufficient for these things ? ' He showed the importance of the Christian ministry, *1st*, from its origin ; *2dly*, from its end ; *3dly*, the means by which its ends are to be accomplished.—Attended several meetings of the preachers who are in town. Attended with my brethren the Committee of Synod appointed to converse with us this morning. The exhortations given were very suitable, and some of them impressive."

In a letter to a relative, of date *March* 6, 1830, he says, " I thank you for your letter of advices

* Prov. xxvii. 17.

which you sent me in the end of last year, and shall be happy to receive another such when you find it convenient. Hints as to the best plans and times of studying would be very acceptable to me.”—“Dr S——,” he states in his Journal, “has given me some advices on my way of preaching, which I mean to consider carefully, though at present I do not entirely agree with him.”—In another paragraph he alludes to a salutary advice on elocution, administered in a different quarter, which he intended to follow, whilst, notwithstanding, he felt hurt “at the dogmatical and public way in which the advice was given.”

The conversation of truly pious and intelligent men was always welcomed as a feast. “I came yesterday,” he says, “from Peebles to Edinburgh; had the pleasure of *Mr M'Dermid's* excellent company.”—“Mr S—— S——, preacher,” it is also mentioned, “came over to Inverary. He remained all night with me, and we had some conversation, which *should not*, at least, have been entirely useless. He is most devoted to the work of the gospel, and puts me to shame by his superior zeal, energy, and fortitude in doing his duty.”—“*Walls, July 7, 1830.*—Last month I spent very pleasantly, sometimes at *Mr Irvine's*, sometimes at [Rev.] Mr Stobbs'. I was much gratified by seeing *Mr Ferdinand Croth*, a Moravian missionary, who was some time at Stromness, on his way to Labrador. He spoke extremely little English, and had no conception of English grammar; nor did he know Latin or French. Yet it was astonishing how he contrived to make himself understood, and to understand us. His last words to

Mr and Mrs Stobbs, Mr Irvine, and myself, when he addressed us severally, on shaking hands before going into the boat the last time he was on shore, were, ‘ You pray, forget me *nicht*.’ I hope the Lord will guard him on his perilous voyage, and give him a happy commencement and a successful continuance of his labours. He is a young man, about twenty-four or twenty-six, not remarkably good-looking, but of a very candid, simple, and pleasing expression of countenance. He seemed to conceal nothing.”

While journeying from place to place, to sow the good seed of the Word, he was anxious to prevent the pleasures of conversation from unduly encroaching on the hours allotted to study; and, though a great proportion of his leisure was occupied in preparing his discourses, he reserved part of it for *reading*. We find him accordingly, on various occasions, adverting to the books he perused, and the benefit he reaped from them; a slight specimen of which may be presented to the reader:—

After alluding to his own efforts in the spiritual warfare, he says, “ I have been reading some excellent sermons of *Dr Paley*, on resisting evil propensities by the aid of Divine influence.”—At another time, he thus expresses his esteem for one of the ablest productions of its celebrated author:—“ Read *Dr Thomson’s* Sermons on Universal Pardon. I ought to be grateful for falling in with this book, as I hope it will tend to give me more clear and settled views on the subject than I have hitherto entertained.”—He adverts also to another publication, in terms that

must, in some degree, be attributed to the partiality occasioned by relationship:—"I have had the satisfaction of seeing at last my uncle's Life of Ebenezer Erskine, and of Henry Erskine of Chirnside, and of sending a copy to Mr Brown of Whitburn. May the Lord prosper this work of my uncle's hand, and make it the instrument of quickening many of his people to follow the faith and patience of those worthy men, whose character and history he has delineated! I sometimes felt, while reading of the Lord's goodness to them, what encouragement I have to trust in the God of my fathers, and what weighty, and solemn, and affecting obligations I am laid under to live not to myself but to Him. O that these impressions were more fixed and more habitual!"

He was evidently solicitous, however, to profit not merely by intercourse with men and with books, but also by the lessons addressed to him in the *volume of nature*. The services assigned to him during his probationary course, happened to be so arranged as to afford an opportunity of travelling north, south, east, and west, and of surveying, to a considerable extent, the diversified scenery of the British isles. These excursions proved favourable to his health and spirits; and it was not without lively interest that he beheld for the first time a great variety of objects that can never cease to attract curiosity, awaken sensibility, and elevate the feelings of piety. His letters to his friends contain pleasing sketches of several parts of the country, noted for beauty or grandeur, which he had occasion to see—as the Glen of Delvin

and Glenalp. But let one brief specimen suffice, namely, an extract from a letter to a cousin, dated *Inverary, Feb. 12, 1830*. After mentioning his passage in a steam-boat from Glasgow to Argyleshire, he gives the following account of a walk of twelve miles over a hilly district, during a violent storm of wind :—

“ The road for the first few miles,” says he, “ goes through a deep glen, in getting out of which it mounts over the top of a heath, which you would think, as you approach it, you could never manage to get past. The only interest of the scenery at such a season, and in such weather, was the grandeur which vastness and dreariness never fails to be fraught with ; and for this quality such a scene is worth visiting, even at the expense of being exposed to the ‘ pelting of the pitiless storm.’ It may serve to impress us with some proper idea of the majesty of Omnipotence, and our own littleness and frailty, to be alone in the midst of the everlasting hills, and reflect how easy it would be for that tempest whose fury they sustain and beat back with almost no perceptible injury to themselves, to effect our destruction, and that so completely, that it would be difficult to find a trace that we were there still, or had ever been there.”

Some spots that he visited, owing to the associations with which, to him, they were fraught, could not be otherwise than peculiarly pleasing and affecting. It gratified him not a little to obtain a passing glance of the place where a venerable man of God, and a sufferer in the cause of truth, first exercised his ministry. “ As the coach stopped,” says he, in a letter to a relative, “ twenty minutes at *Cornhill*, we

had the pleasure of visiting the church and graveyard, and standing on what seems to have been part of the foundation of HENRY ERSKINE'S church." In another letter he says, "I enjoyed my stay at *Dunfermline* very much. I visited the Old Abbey Church, which now serves only as a kind of portico to the new one. I saw RALPH ERSKINE'S grave. I was shown also an ancient oaken arm-chair in which he used to sit, whether in his study or the session-house I cannot tell." His visit to Inverness gave him similar pleasure:—"Dec. 16, 1828. Found out cousin *Lydia's*, and was very warmly received by herself and her husband. Next morning (Saturday) visited old aunt *Margaret*, and her [other] two daughters, with their families. On Sabbath, preached three times in Mr Scott's chapel. On Monday forenoon I visited my grandfather's birthplace, and entered the house where he first drew breath. Now he breathes a purer air, and dwells in a house of many mansions. Saw on my way back to Inverness the vitrified ramparts of *Craig Phatric*. What were once stones are now light and porous substances, melted and run together by what, after all, is but a trifling effort of that tremendous agency, the full energy of which rolls the heavens together like a scroll, and burns up the earth and the works that are therein."

Nothing of the kind, however, seems to have moved or delighted him more than an excursion he took, in company with an uncle, in the fall of the year 1829, to Ireland, the country where he himself first drew breath. A small portion of his memoranda, relative to this trip, is as follows:—"Oct. 6, *Tuesday*. Left

Edinburgh this morning at nine, along with my uncle *Simpson*. We design sailing to-morrow for Dublin. The Lord bless us, and keep us. I wish this evening (may God help me to put my wish into practice) to draw near to God, to commend myself, my mother, my sister, and all my dear friends, to his gracious care ; to entreat him, if it seem good to him, to preserve us from all the dangers of sea and land, and bring us back in safety to our home and our ordinary duties ; to make us useful, while we are in Ireland, to our Christian friends, and to those who know not, or obey not, our Lord Jesus Christ.”—“ *Edinburgh, Dec. 5*. I have delayed longer than might have been expected, to write a brief account of my visit to Ireland, considering the merciful providences of which I was, during that visit, the subject. I have been rescued from the dangers both of sea and land, and on the former, from peril by tempest and by fire. Yet, O how forgetful I am of God’s benefits ! My uncle S. and I left Edinburgh on Tuesday the 6th October, and went no farther than Glasgow that day. Reached Dublin on Thursday evening about six o’clock. Found our friends *Mr* and *Mrs Waddell* next day, who were very much surprised at seeing us, as they did not expect to meet us till they arrived at *Monaghan*. We spent Friday and Saturday in seeing the city, and all that is most remarkable in it, as the College, the library of which contains 120,000 volumes. * * * On Sabbath forenoon I heard *Mr Stewart* preach from these words, ‘ He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.’ He gave evidence of very con-

siderable powers, both of argument and of eloquence ; of the former, in some remarks that he made about the real deity of our Lord, and of the latter in an appeal to sinners, in the conclusion, in reference to the coming judgment. I preached in his pulpit in the evening. Mr and Mrs Waddell went to Monaghan on Saturday, and we followed them thither on Monday, and met with a most warm reception from old Mr Waddell. We spent till Friday most happily with him and his family. It was here that I saw Hope and Jessy, probably for the last time on earth. Why should such separations affect us so much as they do, at least in such a way? They ought to make us serious, but not sad. They should make us think of the transiency of this world, and all the good that is in it, even its friendships, and of that better world where our friendships shall be renewed, to last for ever. My uncle and I reached Belfast on Friday evening. Next morning went to *Newtonards*. My heart thrilled when I came within sight of *Scrabo-hill*, which was the first hill I ever saw. I could not help thinking, too, how my dear father would feel on approaching the place which was the home of his heart, when returning at any time from a journey ; and I thought, too, of that heart being long ago mouldered into feelingless dust. But I thought, too, of the happier home where we shall go to him, though he shall not return to us. On arriving in *Newtonards*, we went direct to the manse and meeting-house, and visited every room in the house, and every corner in the garden. After that, we went to the graveyard. There was a funeral at the time. I

asked the sexton where my father's grave was ; he pointed to a certain part of the burying-ground, and said it was one of these *old* stones there. The word *old* was what I scarce expected to hear. And is it possible, I asked myself, that the very memorial of my father's grave has begun to decay, ere I visited the spot for the first time ? I would have liked to be alone on such an occasion. Though my uncle was with me, I could not help weeping, although I endeavoured, by being as silent as possible, to conceal it from him. On the Sabbath, I had the satisfaction of preaching the glorious gospel from the same pulpit whence my father proclaimed it, and to many who heard it from his lips. No earthly pleasure could have been greater than the affectionate and respectful reception I met with from the people, so purely on account of their reverence and love for his memory."

A young preacher's popularity does not always correspond with his real talents, or equal the fond expectations entertained by himself and his friends. This was possibly, in some degree, the case with the subject of the present memoir. He seems, indeed, to have met with a considerable share of esteem and respect in all the congregations, vacant and settled, in which he appeared.* Among congregations and

* We are credibly informed that a certain ruling elder of the Secession Church, distinguished for knowledge and ability, having happened to hear him preach one Sabbath in Edinburgh, though not the city of his residence, pronounced this high encomium upon him. Being asked whether or not he knew the preacher's name,

individuals who had repeated opportunities of hearing him, it was generally remarked that his discourses became increasingly edifying and impressive. In many of the vacancies where he officiated, there were groups of individuals with whom he was a great favourite, and who earnestly wished to have him for their minister. But owing to the superior popularity of some of his brethren, and the determination of an all-wise Providence, the majority of votes, in a variety of places where he was proposed as a candidate, turned out in favour of others. On those occasions, though he did not affect an entire exemption from the bitterness of disappointed hope, he discovered an exemplary meekness and acquiescence in the Divine will. In reference to some of these occurrences, he expresses himself in his Journal in the following terms :—

“ *July 24, 1830.*—I once had a considerable party in Nicolson’s Street ; some of the Dunfermline people expressed themselves very friendly to me ; it was expected by many that I would be Mr Brown’s (of Whitburn) colleague and successor ; and yet I am shut out of all these places. All this was so ordained by Him who is the owner of all good, and can do what he will with his own. It might have all happened to any other as well as to me. If there be any peculiarity in my case, it is that peculiar indolence prevents me from making the exertions of which I am capable, in order to recommend myself to a Chris-

his answer was, “ No ; but I have heard enough to convince me that he is at once a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian.”

tian people, and thus introduce myself into some scene of ministerial usefulness. I endeavoured, however, to keep down envious, and discontented, and unreasonable emotions, and prayed to God to give me a real satisfaction in the prosperity of those of my fellow-students and now fellow-preachers, to whom I, in the pride of my heart, felt assured that I should have been at least equal with regard to success."

Before the expiration of other two months, his faith and patience were tried by new events of the same character. To these he particularly refers in the following extract of an ingenuous letter to his mother:—

" *Kirkwall, Sept. 8, 1830.*—The first piece of intelligence is one which I fear may disappoint you, notwithstanding what I told Mary about the doubt hanging over the affair. On my arrival here this morning, I got a letter from Mr Stobbs, dated 2d September, informing me of the result of the *Queylow* (Sandwick) moderation, namely, that *Mr Buchan* was called, twenty-one voting for him and six for me. Mr Irvine proposed me, and the only other elder, Mr Buchan. Mr Stobbs' letter, which you shall see, was very kind, I should rather say, very affectionate. I endeavoured to look on the matter as the arrangement of infinite wisdom, and intended for my good as well as that of the church. But I had another disappointment yet to bear. At breakfast, just after we had been speaking of *Queylow*, Miss P—— remarked, that she had seen in the newspaper Mr Marshall is called to Whithorn. I had in some measure anticipated this, but I was not at the time thinking of it. To receive such a double lesson of

patience and humility by two such pieces of intelligence, coming to me almost at the same time, seemed very striking. I cannot help feeling a little sore ; yet I was enabled to cast all my care on Him, who, I know, had his eye on both cases ; and I do not, indeed, recollect of being more reconciled to submit to any thing he shall see good to appoint for me. Pray, my dear mother, that my proud and foolish heart may not draw me away from such submission to discontented and ambitious feelings, in reference to my situation and allotments in the Church of Christ."

In his reply to the letter just referred to, from the Rev. William Stobbs of Stromness, who had shown him the most cordial friendship, he displays the same Christian spirit. After alluding to the pain of separating from so valued a friend, with whom he had once anticipated the pleasure of often taking sweet counsel together, he thus continues :—" We have one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all ; and that consideration should in a great degree soften the regrets of distance on earth, while it assures us of the blessed hope of meeting and dwelling together at last in a world which passeth not away. Yet a little while, and if we are Christ's disciples, he will gather us into his Father's home, to one another, and to himself. O that, in the mean time, our anxiety, and ambition, and business, were to glorify him on earth, and to finish the work he has allotted for each of us to do. O for inclination and resolution to go any where, to do any work, to take up any cross, for the honour of the Saviour

and the advancement of his kingdom. Had we such feelings and determinations, the very fact of our leaving all for Christ's sake would endear us the more to each other, and strengthen the hope of meeting again in the great multitude of them that love his appearing. I trust you will enjoy much of the Divine presence in all your anxieties and labours, and have in Mr Buchan a valuable and agreeable neighbour. Pray, I beseech you, that the same Divine wisdom may guide and dispose of me, not so as will flatter my ambition and provide for my worldly ease and respectability, but as will most effectually tend to make me diligent in working out my own salvation, and saving them that hear me. My warmest regards to Mrs Stobbs."

Whilst the hope of obtaining a call to a fixed ministry in Scotland was thus deferred, he had a pressing invitation to cross the Atlantic, that he might promote the cause of the Redeemer's kingdom among the long-injured and neglected negroes of Jamaica. At the beginning of May he received from the Rev. Hope M. Waddell, the friend of his heart, a letter dated Feb. 1, 1830, containing highly favourable accounts of his health and comfort, and prospects of success; and urging him to go out to labour in the same field by the first ship that should sail in winter. This interesting epistle touched a cord within him that was ever ready to vibrate, and led to much solemn and prayerful deliberation. From his recorded sentiments on the subject, it is clear that, provided he saw certain obstacles arising from his own constitution and other circumstances removed, his inclina-

tions were decidedly in favour of missionary labour. "I prayed to God," says he, "that he would remove this difficulty ; and, if consistent with his will, send me to preach among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ. For when I think how early Providence directed my views to the missionary cause, how I have been thrown in the way of persons such as Watson, Waddell, and others, whose society was calculated to keep alive the interest I had begun to feel in the great enterprise of evangelizing the world ; considering, too, the removal, in a good measure, of the obstacles presented to my going abroad, and especially the urgent invitation which Waddell has sent me, as it were, from the very negroes themselves, to whom, at one of the stations, he mentioned my wish to come out and teach them—considering all these things, I can hardly resist the conclusion, if I desired to do so, that God called me to go to Jamaica without delay. I think that, on the whole, my simple wish is to know what Christ will have me to do, and to be enabled to perform *his* will, whatever it be."

After an interval of several months, during which he asked and received the opinion of an eminent surgeon regarding the capabilities of his bodily frame, consulted a few esteemed friends, and often revolved the matter in his own mind, not omitting earnest supplications to God for direction, he wrote a judicious reply to Mr Waddell at the beginning of October. He frankly owned his missionary leanings, and his aptness to respond to the language in which Divine Providence appeared to address him. Having noticed the decision to which the new congregation

in Sandwick, and the people of Whithorn had come, he adds, "It was universally expected that both these calls should have been for me. Probably the result will show that Providence never designed I should accept any other call than that you have conveyed to me from the poor negroes." He avows, at the same time, his preference for the scheme of churches, in their ecclesiastical capacity, sending forth missionaries, gives a cheering detail of the resolution finally adopted that same year by the United Associate Synod to establish foreign missions of their own, and of the measures begun to be employed for carrying that resolution into effect, and informs him that he had resolved to await the report of the committee in spring, and that he could not, at any rate, go out sooner than November 1831."

The design of holding himself in readiness for personal service in the missionary field, should it seem meet to the great Head of the church to employ him in this arduous work, induced him to wish, that to whatever other qualifications he possessed, he should add what is usually deemed a very desirable accompaniment, a tolerable portion of medical knowledge. With a view to acquire this advantage, he resolved, with the consent of his relatives, and the approval of his clerical friends, to attend a number of medical classes in Edinburgh during the session commencing November 1830. Having made arrangements to that effect, we find him, in a private memorandum, adverting to his situation, and recording his pious resolutions as follows :—

“*Edinburgh, Saturday, Nov. 13, 1830.*—I am now settled once more in Edinburgh for some time. May God’s countenance shine upon me in the prosecution of my new and interesting studies. But may He effectually preserve me from the temptations to which they expose me. I am now in danger of neglecting my special duties as a preacher of the gospel, in the prosecution of the studies to which I am to devote this winter. For the purpose of strengthening me to resist temptation, let me be instant in prayer to God for his grace to help me in time of need—scrupulously exact in setting apart a considerable portion of my time, morning and evening, for devotional employments, and another portion for theological study. I must be on my guard against a listless, passive, and desultory mode of study. As I have turned my attention to chemistry, mineralogy, and anatomy, let me, in good earnest, study them with persevering and systematic care.”

The same day that he penned these sentences, he addressed the following request to his sister:—“I entreat your prayers at the outset of my medical studies, that I may make them an important help, not a hinderance to my duty as a preacher of the gospel. Though, I trust, we shall every day remember each other, yet let there be a special intercession for each other, and our dear mother, and our other near relatives and intimate friends, on Sabbath evening.”

The following extract of a letter serves also to throw additional light on the devotional spirit he maintained, the comfort he felt, and the advantages

he enjoyed, during this winter's residence at the University :—

“ EDINBURGH, Dec. 17, 1830.

“ MY DEAR UNCLE,—I have as yet seen no reason to regret my coming to town this winter. I have opportunities not only of studying, but of improving my health, much superior to those which I enjoyed in most places where I have been since I was licensed. I have also a few excellent friends with whom I spend an hour now and then in walking, or in conversation in the house. Among these are Mr B——y, preacher, and Mr J——s H——n, preacher. I walk almost daily with a *Mr Cowan*, from the neighbourhood of Stranraer, a young man who has finished his studies at the Hall, and has lately been received into the seminary of the Scottish Missionary Society.*

“ I like all my classes very much. The anatomy lectures are uncommonly interesting, as they present not merely orderly, systematic descriptions, but a great deal of practical information and physiological discussion. DR KNOX has gone over the skeleton, so far as regards the bones themselves, and he is now describing the joints and ligaments. Every step which a beginner in this department of science takes, opens out to him new displays of that wisdom, benignity, and power, by which we have been ‘fearfully and wonderfully made.’ Thus, a minister of the gospel, though he should make no strictly medical or surgical use of anatomy, might find it of great advantage in enlarging his views, both of the evidences of the

* Now the Rev. John Cowan, missionary in Jamaica.

existence of the great Creator, and of the manifestations of his glorious attributes, unfolded with endless variety, and yet with the most admirable harmony, in all the works of his hands. I trust my proper occupations will not suffer from my new employments. When I allow this to be the case, I shall be disqualifying myself for my work as a preacher of the gospel in one way, under the pretext of the better qualifying myself for performing it in another.

“I have been reading *Douglas of Cavers’* ‘Thoughts on Prayer.’ It is a tract well suited to the present state of the Christian world, and the present prospects of the Church, as to the conversion of the nations. One thing he principally urges is, that we must *expect* more ere we can hope that our prayers should be heard to any great extent. O that He who has the residue of the Spirit would pour on us, and all in whose spiritual welfare we are interested, and on the ministers and preachers, and Christian people at large, the Spirit of grace and of supplications. Then when He has taught us to ask more largely, we may expect He graciously intends to pour on us a larger proportion of spiritual gifts Dr Brown has asked me to preach either forenoon or afternoon for him on Sabbath first.”

During the course of this winter, notwithstanding his attention to medical studies, he preached almost every Sabbath either in town or country; and it is evident from several memoranda, that he then most carefully sat in judgment on his own appearances. With unsparing severity does he often accuse himself of great deficiencies with regard to that spirituality of

mind, simplicity of aim, and heartfelt concern for the welfare of souls, which should characterise every preacher of the Word. Nor does he overlook the sin of distrusting a gracious God. He laments and prays against those desponding and perplexing thoughts that were sometimes apt to assail him, in reference, among other points, to his bodily health. "I have been at times depressed," says he, "about the state of my health, although, on the whole, when I deliberately reflect on the matter, I have no reason to think I am weaker than I was this time last year, at which time I was a good deal troubled with expectoration. Neither then nor now, however, have I any pain in the chest, and my voice in preaching is generally quite hale and clear. Why then am I disquieted or cast down? Let me trust in God. It is well, indeed, I should be reminded of my frailty, and number my days. It is mercy, the same mercy that has saved both my body and my spirit from destruction, that does not allow me such a perfect enjoyment of health and vigour, that I should be tempted to live as though I should live for ever. O that my great concern were, not to live long, but to live to God; not so much to enjoy more health, as to devote to the interests of religion in myself, and in those around, what measure of health I possess; and that measure is greater than what is bestowed on many others."

We must now advert to a new occurrence which happened soon after the commencement of this winter, and exercised a powerful influence on his usefulness and comfort during the few remaining years of

his life.—We mean the call which, on the 24th December 1830, he at last received, to the United Associate congregation of Whithorn. His feelings on this occasion cannot be better understood than by means of the following memorandum, in which it is devoutly noticed, in connexion with other merciful dispensations of Providence :—

“ *Friday, Jan. 7, 1831.*—Thus God has brought me to the end of another year, and it has been a year marked by much kindness on His part with respect to the preservation of my life and health in travelling both by land and sea during stormy weather. I ought particularly to remember my journey to Whithorn and back again in January, my voyage to and from Orkney, with my passing safely over the dangerous seas that separate island from island. In October, also, I was much exposed going to Carlisle presbytery, and again in returning, yet the bad effects produced on my health were not of a serious nature, or of very long duration. The conclusion of the year has been marked by a memorable event, my being called, on the 24th December, to Whithorn. My mother, Mary, and I, were very much surprised by noticing the call in the *Scotsman* newspaper on Thursday last week. On Friday evening I got a letter from Mr William Marshall of Girlieston, expressed in very friendly terms, and affording me information, on the whole, favourable as to the harmony of the call. It was not till Monday, however, that I was put fully in possession of the particulars it was necessary for me to know, in order to make up my mind, by receiving

a communication from Mr Robertson of Stranraer, who moderated.

“ Now I know not what to do. I have both secretly, and in conversation with my friends, pledged myself, if Providence should permit me, to execute a resolution for the cause of foreign missions. I cannot know whether I shall be sent out by the Synod till its meeting in April, and I cannot well delay announcing my determination to the Whithorn people so long. There are several circumstances that certainly weigh strongly on the side of Whithorn ; but whether these reasons should decide the question I am now called on to determine, is a point about which I am not yet satisfied. Let me importunately ask the Divine guidance, and devote an hour or two frequently, for some days, to the serious and cool consideration of the matter, that I may view it in all its bearings, and divest myself as much as possible of every prejudice and bias. O that God may rescue me from the double danger of sloth on the one hand, and presumption on the other ! ”

The circumstances in which he was now placed obliged him very soon to determine the question, whether he should accept of the call to Whithorn, or devote his life to missionary labour in a foreign land. He regretted the necessity of coming to a final decision on so weighty a point within the course of a very few weeks. During that interval, however, he thought and prayed much on the subject, nor did he neglect the aid of friendly counsel. The result was, that whatever doubts and anxieties regarding the path of duty had oppressed his mind, he ultimately felt him-

self obliged to conclude that he ought, *in the mean time*, to remain at home, and undertake the usual exercises for trial, with a view to his settlement at Whithorn.

It is unnecessary here to produce large accounts from his Diary or letters, of the arguments and prepossessions by which he was swayed on the one side and the other in this crisis of his life ; suffice it to state, that now, as on other occasions, "integrity and uprightness preserved him," and that his conclusion was built on satisfactory grounds. The writer of these sheets, whatever interest he feels in the great cause of missions, is not ashamed to admit that he is in some degree responsible for that determination to which his nephew was led. He was pleased to say, in a letter to another relative, "I asked uncle D——'s advice, and he gave it very promptly, very affectionately, and very fully ;" and he represents his final determination as the result of his own deliberations, "aided by his uncle's suggestions." These suggestions, calmly and moderately expressed, referred partly to circumstances connected with filial duty that were entitled to some consideration, and partly to the delicacy of his bodily constitution, too sadly apparent, alas ! from his subsequent history. It was also candidly stated to him, that notwithstanding his zeal, the gifts he possessed, and the native cast of his mind, seemed fully better adapted to home service than to the work of a foreign missionary. What appeared chiefly to influence his decision, indeed, was his own supposed deficiency in those high qualifications which the responsible office of missionaries, and especially

of those who go first out under the superintendence of any church, indispensably requires.

It remains, then, to detail, in the concluding portion of this Life and Diary, the particulars of his ordination, and of his brief ministerial career.

PERIOD IV.

FROM HIS SETTLEMENT AT WHITHORN TILL HIS DEATH.

WHITHORN is a royal borough in Galloway of great antiquity, and beautifully situated in the bay of Wigton. The inhabitants of that town and its vicinity, in common with many other districts in the south-west of Scotland, have for ages signalized themselves by their warm attachment to the principles of the Protestant Reformation, and of Presbyterian order. A considerable number of years since, a congregation was formed here in connexion with the Secession Church. Though at first small, it gradually increased, while the great object of the ministry appeared to be not a little advanced by the Divine blessing on the labours of their first pastor, the late REV. JOHN SMITH.

This worthy man was ordained among them in the year 1795, and died on the 24th April 1830, in the 79th year of his age. For some time previous to his death, he was disabled by affliction for the public duties of his office, in consequence of which his congregation was supplied by probationers. John Henry Gardner was appointed to preach for the first time to this respectable community on the last two Sabbaths of November 1829. A congregational meeting was soon after held, at which it was agreed to apply for regular preaching, with a view to call a colleague and

successor to their aged minister then living ; and at the same time to request the Presbytery to favour them by obtaining Mr Gardner and another young man to preach to them again some more Sabbaths. In compliance with this request, conveyed by the Presbytery clerk, he returned to Whithorn, and preached there on the fourth and fifth Sabbaths of January 1830. In the autumn following, a few months after the decease of Mr Smith, a moderation took place. Agreeably, however, to what has been stated above, though the subject of this narrative was proposed as a candidate, the majority of the electors gave their voice in favour of the other, namely, *Mr William Marshall*. The successful nominee, nevertheless, having also received a call to Cupar in Angus, to which the preference was given, the people of Whithorn, soon after the affair was decided against them, determined to renew their efforts to procure a successor to their venerable pastor, and in consequence gave a harmonious call, as we have seen, to Mr Gardner, on the 24th December that same year.

The circumstances attending this call were by no means discouraging. In a letter to a friend, written a few days after full information regarding it had reached him, he states some particulars, and expresses his own views of it, in the following words :—"There were three candidates. At the second voting, Mr H—— had 27, and I 40. Only the males voted, which accounts for the small number altogether. The call was immediately signed by all the electors present, and by other members on the Sabbath after. It appears, on the whole, an agreeable enough busi-

ness, though they were divided in their votes. As to temporalities, I must not, I know, 'seek great things for myself.' Certainly what they promise is more than many congregations, equally able, provide for their ministers. * * They have subscribed what is sufficient to erect a gallery, which is already contracted for. Every one who knows about Whitthorn, believes that a minister would be very happy and comfortable there. I entreat that you will remember me before Him who has 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' and implore that I may be kept at every point from following my own inclinations, and seeking my own worldly comfort, instead of cordially asking, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' The subject presents to my mind some difficulties, to the encountering of which I am utterly inadequate, unless directed by wisdom from above."

These last expressions appear to refer, in particular, to the difficulty he felt for a time in deciding the question, whether he ought to accept of the call to Whithorn, or hold himself at liberty to undertake a foreign mission, in the event of the Synod's choosing to employ him in that important service. Having determined this point, however, in the manner already noticed, his thoughts were intensely occupied by the solemn prospect of exercising the ministerial office in the place to which he had been harmoniously invited. In a letter to Mr Brown of Whitburn, dated March 23, 1831, he expresses a deep sense of his own insufficiency, and an ardent desire to enjoy the benefit of that venerated father's advices and prayers:—"Never before," says he, "had I more need of your counsel

and your prayers, than when now preparing to enter in good earnest on the work of the ministry. When I think how little furnished I am in every respect with those qualities which are required in its execution, I am almost overwhelmed. I fear I have not been careful to *occupy* the talents committed to me, and then there is an account to be rendered for every one of them. I have been much struck with several articles in the 'Pastor's Manual,' especially Bostwick's and Dr Erskine's Sermons."

Having delivered the prescribed discourses for trial before the Presbytery of Wigton, and passed through all the customary examinations to the satisfaction of that Presbytery, his ordination was appointed to take place on the 13th July.

He felt much gratified by the manner in which the people received him on his arrival among them, a few weeks before that interesting day. A letter dated Whithorn, Friday evening, June 24, 1834, contains the following devout and affectionate allusion to their kindness:—"I have, as you see, at length reached the place which is likely to be the scene of my ministerial labours. The people gave me a most hearty and affectionate welcome. I have every reason to believe that many of them have been *as* earnest in prayer on my account, as they were cordial in the expressions of respect with which they received me. O that these prayers may be answered! and then I shall be less unworthy of their esteem than I now am."

Another letter, written July 14, the day following his ordination, while it breathes a spirit of

gratitude for the kindness of Providence in arranging his lot, abounds with solemn reflections on the responsible office with which he had just been invested :—

“ The eventful day is now over, and I am solemnly installed in the high and holy office of the Christian ministry. O that I more really felt how high and holy the work is which I have undertaken ! To speak and act for God—to snatch those who care not for their danger, in spite of their own reluctance and opposition, from the fearful peril to which they are exposed—to enlighten, and guide, and comfort the disciples of the Redeemer, many of whom (to use Spencer’s words) ‘ walked with God before I was born ;’—these, my dear sister, are no easy or common things to aim at. Besides ordinary human frailty and insufficiency, I seem to myself to have many drawbacks and defects about my character, with regard to ministerial qualifications, peculiar to myself. Every young minister, it may be, who has any acquaintance with his own heart, feels more or less in this way. Yet it is difficult for one not to persuade himself (after all the assurance which others give him that his experience is not singular) that *their* diffidence of themselves is chiefly the result of Christian humility, while his own is that of a melancholy consciousness of the truth. I remember, however, that with some such complaints of their own weakness, are mingled confident though humble expressions of assurance that God is really working in them ; that their characters, however deficient or weak in many points, are on the whole new-moulded, and moulded

aright ; and solemn appeals to the Master to whom they devote themselves, with respect to the purity and sincerity of the motives by which they are actuated. I may instance *Matthew Henry* and *Spencer*. In such confidence, and in such appeals, I feel, for my own part, hardly able to indulge. It is a reflection full of encouragement and consolation, however, that it was manifestly never the intention of the Head of the Church to have his servants, any more than all his ordinary disciples, of one stature and strength. On the contrary, we are assured that there are vessels of all capacities, and all degrees of preciousness, in the house of God, though all destined to serve in their appointed order, and all vessels of honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use. O that He who can put the treasure into the earthen vessels, would, by doing so in my case, according to the measure of grace which he may be pleased to allot for me, show that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of man. * * * *

“ I have got my half-year's stipend, a suit of clothes, a pulpit Bible, a new cloth for the pulpit, and every thing, in short, which is usual on such an occasion. I have much reason to bless that kind Providence which has appointed me to so promising a station.”

The particulars of his ordination, with a few subsequent incidents, are more minutely detailed in his private papers, as follows :—

“ WHITHORN, *August 10, 1831.*

“ I was solemnly set apart by prayer and the lay-

ing on of the hands of the Presbytery, to the office of the ministry in this place, on Wednesday the 13th day of last month. Mr Robertson of Stranraer presided. Mr Smellie gave the charge, and Dr Taylor preached from 1 Timothy iii. 1,—‘ If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.’ The other ministers on the platform were, Mr Puller, Mr M’Guffie of South Ronaldshay, and my cousin Skinner. Alas, how soon has the impression of that solemnity worn off my mind ! O God, whose I have said I am, and whom I have vowed to serve in the gospel of thy Son, cleanse me thoroughly from mine iniquity, purge me from my sin ! O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes ; then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

“ From my experience hitherto, I have every reason to believe that my lot has been cast among a most affectionate, and, on the whole, respectable and pious people. The cordiality with which they received me is very gratifying, considering especially the divided character of the call.

“ I preached the first Sabbath on 2 Corinthians iii. 5, ‘ Our sufficiency is of God.’ I have since felt, repeatedly, what folly it is to think our sufficiency is in ourselves. My cousin’s text in the forenoon was Jeremiah vii. 2, ‘ Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord.’ He preached in the evening from ‘ Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.’ I preached the next Sabbath on

1 Peter iii. 18, 'Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;' and began a course of lectures on the Philippians. The following Sabbath, *Mr Campbell* of Irvine preached in the afternoon, for the Synod's Missions, from Isaiah lv. last verse. Last Sabbath, I preached from 2 Peter iii. 11, 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?'

"My mother was present at the ordination, and staid with me until Monday last, when I accompanied her as far as Stranraer, on her way home by Glasgow. Besides it being very gratifying to my dear mother to see the people among whom I am to spend probably the rest of my days, her presence was very encouraging and pleasant to me, and will enable her to think of and pray for me in a more distinct and earnest manner than she could have done, had my situation been known to her only by report."

That he might be capable of feeding the people solemnly committed to his charge, with knowledge and with understanding, and of "bringing forth out of his treasure things new and old," he determined to augment his own stores; and, in particular, to prosecute biblical and theological studies with renewed ardour. His solicitude on this subject, and the plan he intended to pursue, may be learned in some degree from the following extract of a letter to a friend, written little more than two months after his settlement:—

“ WHITHORN, *Oct. 24, 1831.*

* * * “ I may tell you in general, regarding my studies, that I will find it necessary to make them almost all directly subservient to the supplying of the weekly wants of my people. I have been such an idler all my life, that I find I require to study almost every subject, however plain, before I can get any thing to say about it that is worthy of being listened to. I told you that I am lecturing the Philippians. The subject of the next lecture will, of course, always serve me for critical study so far every week ; but I intend, if I can accomplish it, to study some other book, say Romans or Hebrews. Both of these epistles I have repeatedly read critically alone. The former I read at Foldhouse twice in this way. But they are both so rich and so difficult, that ten times reading is not too often. What I wish is to master one of them so far, that I could venture on a regular exposition of it from the pulpit. Probably, however, after I have finished Philippians, I shall take the history of our Saviour, assuming one of the Gospels as a basis, but taking a text now and then, when the connexion of the narrative requires it, from the rest.

“ I announced last Sabbath, that I intend (God willing) to deliver a series of discourses on the principal points of Christian doctrine, giving one of them now and then instead of the lecture. This plan I have adopted as much for my own instruction as for that of my congregation. One is apt to give too much or too little attention to many particular subjects, when destitute of a fixed plan. My ordinary train of topics, however, I shall continue to select,

just as they best suit the state of my own mind, or the circumstances passing around me. Spencer's plan was to 'turn every thing into gold;' that is, to improve every passing event for the edification of the people. I have as yet, alas! wonderfully little of this happy art. As I am going along in my series of discourses, I wish to read one or two systematic works on theology, a kind of reading I have too much neglected. I have got Maestricht and Turretine, and probably I may also have Dwight and Hill.

"As a kind of relaxation, I mean to revise the history of England in the first place, and then, perhaps, may take that of Rome. Another object I wish very much to accomplish, is the polishing of my rusty acquirements in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. I fear, however, I shall have very little opportunity of doing so. I have selected Cicero on the nature of the gods, for my Latin reading, and may probably take some of Xenophon's works for the Greek.

"If I accomplish the one-half of what I have now detailed, and read besides all that comes in my way in the form of reviews, magazines, newspapers, &c., I shall do better, I confess, than I have ever yet done."

The life of Matthew Henry seems to have impressed him considerably, and he had great pleasure in perusing the popular Commentary of that excellent man. In a letter written January 7, 1833, he says, "I was reading Matthew Henry's life yesterday, and happened to be at that profound and searching specimen of self-examination previous to ordination. I had read it at the time of becoming a minister, but

I prize it now as much as ever, and indeed more, for I am now better aware of the necessity of some of the inquiries he dwells upon, and of the need of those supplies of grace which he determines to implore. I am reading in his Commentary every day, and find this a very interesting and edifying exercise."

We find the following words written by him in his copy of Henry's Commentary :—" Began at the 18th chapter of 2 Samuel, November 16, 1832, and resolve to read at least one chapter every day when at home." At the 22d chapter of 2 Kings, however, he has this memorandum, " Hitherto I have only read at the rate of one half chapter a-day." His intentions relative to the study of the Scriptures in Greek, appear from the following words written with a pencil in his copy of the Septuagint :—" *Jan.* 31, 1833. To read one chapter of the Septuagint one day, and one of the Greek Testament the next."

Before the close of the year 1832, he drew out, in a memorandum book, a sketch of " Employments during winter 1832-3," consisting of three divisions; the first entitled, " Congregational business;" the second, " Studies for improvement;" and the third, " Miscellaneous."

The particulars of the second division, " Studies for improvement," are as follows :—

" 1. FOR DEVOTIONAL PURPOSES.—English Bible, Charnock, Halyburton, Howe's Blessedness of the Righteous, Haweis on the Lord's Supper, Boston's Sermons and Journal, Pilgrim's Progress, Andrew Swanston's Discourses.

“ 2. BIBLICAL.—Luke’s Gospel, Hebrews, Horne’s Sacred Antiquities, Campbell’s Dissertations.

“ 3. THEOLOGICAL.—Calvin, Maestricht, Dr Dick’s Lectures, (my own notes,) Paley’s Evidences, Lytleton’s Conversion of Paul.

“ 4. LITERARY.—Hebrew Psalter, (every week the Psalm I am to explain,) Æschines, Demosthenes, Horace’s *Ars Poetica*, Massillon, Cicero de Officiis, &c.

“ 5. HISTORICAL.—Hume and Smollet, Mitford’s Greece; read M’Crie’s Knox and Melville, and compare with Hume.

“ 6. POLITICAL AND SCIENTIFIC.—Edinburgh Review, Locke on the Understanding.

“ 7. GENERAL AND LIGHTER.

“ Let my other studies be as much as possible so arranged, that it shall be unnecessary to indulge much in this seventh class. The newspapers, the reviews, and magazines, ought to serve in a great measure.”

His active exertions for the improvement of his mind in scriptural and general knowledge, were not allowed to supersede the cultivation of experimental and practical piety. His letters to relatives and intimate friends, combine, with his Diary, to give abundant evidence of his continued attention to prayer, to the personal application of the truth, and to impartial self-inquiry.

“ How delightful,” says he, in one of his letters, “is the thought, that *all* our affairs are observed and managed, and all our vexations and fears sympathized with, by that friend who can never be far off, and never will cease to care for those who cast their cares

upon him. Alas, that we should so imperfectly respond to his affectionate and condescending superintendence, by so feebly associating the remembrance of it, with all our interests and feelings! So much am I convinced of the high importance of thus connecting *every* thing with confidence in the Saviour, and devotedness of heart to him, that there is no principle I urge more earnestly in exhorting the families which I visit; but I do find it far *far* easier to recommend it to others, than to act upon it myself."

In a subsequent communication, he expresses a humbling sense of his own *low attainments* in grace, and earnestly beseeches his friend to abound in prayer on his behalf, that he might become a *growing Christian*. "I feel quite conscious," says he, "of having increased (at least comparatively) in knowledge, and perhaps also in the power of communicating it usefully to others. But alas, how little have I grown in grace, if at all! O while you unite with me in gratitude to God for whatever he has afforded me, *making his strength perfect in weakness*, do not forget to implore for me that the Lord would give me more grace, and make me more faithful, more diligent, and more self-denying. I am not altogether void of such experience, as not to be able to agree with you, in thinking the ministry a delightful as well as honourable work; but alas, I sadly injure both my people and myself, as well as act unworthily of my high vocation, by the listlessness of manner in which I discharge it, or the unhallowed worldliness and selfishness which too often form predominant incentives to whatever exertion I put forth."

“O let me seriously preach to myself,” he exclaims Jan. 4, 1832, “the doctrine I taught the people on Sabbath, ‘The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.’” At a subsequent date, after a minute and searching review of his own conduct, and in particular, of the workings of his heart, he thus concludes :—“Wilt thou yet, O holy and jealous God, be inquired of for these things? May I, after such a retrospect, venture [to resume my preparations for speaking in thy name to my brethren in the midst of the great congregation? I can only do it in the spirit of my text, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’”

After a similar instance of self-investigation, on the 22d of the same month, he not only renewed his earnest supplications to God to strengthen him with all might by his Spirit, but committed to writing a few rules of conduct, which he was desirous to observe.

“The following general rules,” says he, “are obvious. Would that I could keep them, as easily as I can perceive their reasonableness and necessity :—

“1. To make as much of time as possible.

“2. To do always what is most important, or most immediately necessary first.

“3. Never to do any thing for amusement, without a conscientious persuasion that such is the proper time, and such the proper means of relaxation.

“4. To suffer nothing to interfere with any business with which I am at present engaged, but to carry it steadily on till it is finished.

“5. Never to begin the day without prayer and

serious reflection, particularly on the duties and temptations immediately before me.

“6. To keep a strict watch over my own spirit, in its thoughts, affections, and motives.

“7. To associate with every thing in which I engage, the recollection of my character as a Christian and a minister of Christ.

“8. When reading these rules, to endeavour to be deeply impressed with a feeling of my own fickleness and indecision, and the necessity of God’s quickening and establishing grace, to enable me to pay my vows to the Lord.”

In conformity with his intentions, expressed above, he endeavoured to acquit himself with fidelity as a preacher of the word, and to keep back nothing that was profitable. He not only discoursed on the leading doctrines of the Bible, with a uniform regard to a crucified Saviour as their substance and centre ; but adapted his instructions to the varying aspect of Providence, and the manifest exigencies of his hearers. No sooner, for instance, was the whole country alarmed by the appearance of a pestilential malady in England, than he pointed out the great refuge to which the Christian should betake himself in every evil day. A letter to his mother, dated “Whithorn, November 15, 1831,” contains the following passage :—“On account of the probable introduction of cholera in this country, I preached last Sabbath from Isaiah xxvi. 20, 21. ‘Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers,’ &c., from which I took occasion—I. To speak of the apparently coming calamity. 1. Of its nature and magnitude. 2. As to the source from whence

it comes, 'The Lord cometh forth,' &c.—II. To speak of the call addressed to us. 1. Showing what we are called on to do, namely, To cast ourselves on the mercy and wisdom of a redeeming God. 2. The encouragement, namely, 'For a little moment,' and the 'indignation will pass over.' My own fears on this subject are not so great as those of some, but at all events, we ought certainly to use every physical and religious means of preparing for the worst. May you, my dearest mother, experience the true and invulnerable safety of those who are hidden under the shadow of the Almighty."

He repeated his allusions to the same mournful topic, in his new year's sermon, at the beginning of 1832, and also on Thursday March 22d, which was observed as a general Fast on account of the prevalence of this awful scourge. "On that day," he says in a letter to a relative who had requested him to favour him occasionally with a skeleton of his sermons, "I preached from Dan. ix. 8, 'O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face,' &c. I made a few remarks, showing in what respects even those in the ordinary walks of life may find reason of humiliation and repentance when reflecting upon national sins. I. We are at all events chargeable with that inward depravity which is the root of all iniquity. II. The many sins termed national, are really so in no other sense, than as being committed by a great multitude of individuals in their individual capacity. III. We are sharers, however, in the guilt of those sins also, which are *strictly* national, when we connive at them, and do not use those means, which, as citizens of a free community, we

might have used for their prevention. IV. We are frequently guilty, in consequence of not being deeply enough affected by the dishonour done to God, and the injury to our fellow-men, inflicted or perpetuated by such national transgressions."

On the occasion of the election and ordination of elders, in like manner, he seized the opportunity of addressing appropriate instructions to his people. On the day of election, February 14, 1833, he illustrated the character and utility of the Church, with the Saviour's relation to, and agency in it, from the symbolical representation, Rev. i. 12, 13, "I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." Shortly after their separation to the office, his thoughts were directed to the unity that should characterise the Church of the living God. "Last Sabbath," says he, in a letter to a friend of date March 12, 1833, "I preached a sermon on 1 Corinthians, xii. 27, 'Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.' The subject suggested itself to me in connexion with the appointment of new office-bearers in our congregation; and, besides, I thought it one very suitable to the present time, in which there are not a few omens which foretell a union of the various classes of Dissenters. I do not wish to have my people behind the march of true charity, although I find I must not rashly or violently attack their prejudices, but expel them as the Israelites the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, by little and little." After detailing the heads of his discourse, he thus concludes the account: "In some of the inferences I spoke of the consoling na-

ture of the reflection, that there are members of Christ's body in the many communities in which the great doctrines of the gospel are maintained. I especially urged the necessity of cultivating a spirit of candour towards other denominations, and of opening our eyes honestly and manfully to those circumstances in which they excel our own, as well as to those in which we may esteem them inferior to it."

The devout interest he felt in this and other matters relating to his congregation, appears from the following entry, dated Sabbath evening, March 3, 1833 : — " I am as indolent as ever. I have been enabled, however, to exercise some degree of diligence in reference to various matters connected with the affairs of the congregation, such as visiting the sick, preparing my discourses (in some cases at least) with a good deal more care than I had been using for a good while past, and getting new elders elected. The latter business was proceeded in on Thursday the 14th February, and went on with great regularity and peace, for which I ought to be very thankful, as I was beforehand not a little anxious. The persons chosen were —, —, —, —, —, —. I hope I made this business a matter of prayer both before and since. I think carnal and secular as I generally am, I really desired to see men chosen who would promote the honour of religion and the interests of the congregation. O Lord, thou knowest the hearts of all men, and therefore I commit the whole matter, in all its results, to thee."

With the assistance of his elders, he took heed to the conduct of the flock, and endeavoured, by scrip-

tural and prudent measures, to curb sin, and promote the interests of religion and virtue. From the records of Session, it appears that intemperance, as well as other evils, was faithfully discountenanced and censured.

The administration of the holy sacraments deeply interested his pious and affectionate heart. He seems to have kept, for his own use at least, a regular list of the children he baptised. He records the first instance of baptism after his ordination in the following words :—“ *August 29.* Yesterday I administered the ordinance of baptism for the first time. The child was called by my own name, —, —, —, —, a son of Mr Henry Walker, Garliston. May God write his own name upon this little child !”

Conformably to a general and long-established practice in the Secession, the Lord's Supper was administered to his people twice in the year ; and thus, during the short period of his ministry, he had opportunity of observing this sacred institution with them only three times. On all these occasions, he selected appropriate and animating subjects of discourse. On the first, October 2, 1831, he preached from Hebrews xiii. 8, “ Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” On the second, July 1, 1832, from Galatians vi. 14, “ God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” On the third and last, in September the same year, from Revelation i. 5, 6, “ Unto him that loved us,” &c. The following extract from his Diary, containing his memoranda and reflections relative to this last sacramental solemnity, will serve to show the

sincerity of his solicitude for his own spiritual improvement, as well as the edification of the Church :—

“ *Whithorn, Sabbath Evening,
Sept. 30, 1832.*

“ This day the Lord’s Supper was dispensed here. Mr Robertson and Mr Wood assisted me, Mr Hannay having preached on the fast-day. I preached from Revelation i. 5, 6. Although a cold which I caught nearly three weeks ago has not entirely left me, yet I was so well as to feel no deficiency in bodily vigour for the services. I have to bless God besides for carrying me through them without absolutely disgracing the ministry of the gospel, and I hope without altogether depriving the people of Christ of their spiritual nourishment ; and yet how much have I to lament as to the way in which I have discharged these solemn duties ! Although I have endeavoured on this occasion to cultivate that devotional spirit in myself—in which I so much failed on the last occasion of this kind, but still more in my first dispensation of the Lord’s Supper here this time twelve months, and which both the labour of preparing for the pulpit, and the bustle about the house at such a time, are so much calculated to destroy—alas, how superficial have been the best affections I have after all been able to exercise, and how transient is their impression likely to prove ! I was more affected while at the table than I remember to have been for a considerable time past. I could not help shedding tears plentifully when I thought of my many sins and backslidings, both as a Christian and a minister, and of

the infinite forbearance of the Saviour's love, which still permitted me to take refuge in it as my only security, both against the anger of God, and against the deceitfulness and plagues of my own heart. O let me beware of suffering the wicked one to snatch away my attainments, or rather hopes, from me once more ! Surely by this time I ought not to be ignorant of his devices. If I do not deceive myself, I felt sincerely humbled as the chief of sinners, and sincerely desirous that the Saviour's gracious power might entirely vanquish my heart, and carry it captive to himself, and especially mould me as a minister of his gospel into a fit instrument for winning souls to him, and for edifying and instructing his people.

“ Even already I perceive that vanity and ambition are at work in me. I am secretly thinking of what improvements I may make in composition, and thus render myself more esteemed. Truly I have much reason to be more diligent ; but O may my motives be purified from all that is selfish and sinister, and may my whole aim ever be, so to speak as becomes the oracles of God ; so to explain and enforce them as is best fitted for arresting the attention of my people, and opening their understandings, and impressing their hearts. I have vowed this day to be the Lord's only, and wholly, and for ever. I have given myself as a thank-offering to him who loved me. Let me not then rob him of what he has purchased, I trust, with his blood, and I have made his by a voluntary surrender. Let me pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people. I desire

to make this resolution, trusting that Christ will strengthen me. Without him I can do nothing, as my past experience most wofully manifests."

His sentiments regarding the importance of a more frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper than has been customary in the Presbyterian churches, are decidedly expressed in the following extracts of a letter to a friend :—" I am very happy," says he, " to hear about the Broughton Place congregation," (referring to their resolution on this point adopted about the close of the year 1832,) " and would fondly entertain the hope that it is the beginning of better and brighter days in our Church. How sadly to be deplored are those deep-rooted prejudices, (so rooted that it is almost dangerous openly to attack them,) which lead to the so infrequent observance of an institution which is the Christian's very food on the path of his pilgrimage. He should have it at every stage ; whereas he must pass many weary weeks after eating that Bread of Life, before he is suffered to sit him down and taste of it again."

The more private duties of the ministry were not overlooked. He felt a real sympathy for the sick, the infirm, the aged, the dying, and the mourner ; and his visits to them in all probability were repeated quite as frequently as the state of his health and his other avocations allowed. Although his calls were generally short, he had the happy art of suggesting a pithy and appropriate remark, and left behind him some weighty Scripture to be the subject of future meditation. Of the good effects to be expected from the frequent visitation and catechising of the flock at

large, he was well aware, though perhaps the interruptions occasioned by infirmity during his short career scarce permitted him fully to accomplish his intentions. The list of matters relating to "Congregational business," slightly alluded to above, includes "finishing visitation and beginning examination." In a small composition, entitled, "Notes for Family Visitation, Whithorn, Nov. 7, 1831," we find one passage so instructive in relation to this branch of ministerial duty, that we cannot withhold it from the reader. It is as follows :—

"THE ENDS TO BE KEPT IN VIEW.

"1st, The forming and cherishing a friendly intercourse between myself and my people. I must endeavour, therefore, to make myself agreeable to them, by conversing for a little on subjects interesting to them, and with which they are not unacquainted, but especially displaying a kindly regard for their welfare. Avoid all controversy with them, and all subjects on which I might be apt to attack any of their prejudices, except when I think the matter of such importance that it is my duty to set them right. At all events, let me never be dogmatical or overbearing, and make a continual effort to repress any irascible feelings, excited by imprudence or forwardness on the part of any person with whom I may converse.

"2d, Another important object to be aimed at, is to get acquainted with the characters, situations, temptations, &c. of the different families and members connected with my congregation, that I may be able to

adapt my public discourses more effectually to their capacities and wants, and may be excited to be *more particular and earnest in prayer for them in secret*. I must, with a view to this, take brief notes respecting the impressions made on my mind respecting every family, correcting them from time to time, by adding or retrenching, as my increased acquaintance with my people may show to be necessary. I must avoid hasty and uncharitable opinions, and take always the best view of a matter that may appear suspicious.

“3d, Instruction is another end of family visitation. The Apostle Paul *taught* not only *publicly*, but *from house to house*. In some cases, where I have reason to apprehend that the persons are rather ignorant, it would be very advisable to make a few plain and home-coming remarks on the great doctrines of religion. Where I have no reason to apprehend that ignorance exists, it will be better to confine myself to a general exhortation on the importance of attending to the affairs of the soul, and of each in his own circle striving to maintain *a conversation becoming the gospel*.

“4th, *Direction and excitement* as to Christian duty. Let me beware (in aiming at this end) of speaking as if I suspected any marked failure in duty where I do not suspect it. Let me mollify what I say, by some such qualification as that of the Apostle, ‘We hope better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.’ Or let me do it by showing, that however well convinced of our duty, we ought to embrace and be thankful for every op-

portunity of being stirred up by way of remembrance ; and however diligently we put our convictions into practice, even in that case we need encouragements to continue and increase in our activity, considering the many impediments to the right discharge of our duty, both in our uncrucified corruptions, and in the allurements and temptations of Satan and the world.

“ I ought to be very careful in pointing out, 1st, The duties themselves which devolve upon Christians, either in general or in their several places and relations. 2d, The motives by which they ought to be stimulated to the discharge of them. These should not be merely the maintenance of our own good character, or because we think it is indispensable to our spiritual safety that we conduct ourselves in such a manner, but a conscientious regard to what is justly due by us to our fellow-men, and especially an humble desire to glorify God, by conforming ourselves in every thing to his will. I must show also that these motives can never truly influence and constrain our hearts, until they come to be under that peculiar aspect in which they appear, and only appear, when we embrace the pardoning mercy of God through the cross of the Redeemer. And also, that we can perform no duty rightly and acceptably, except God work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

“ 5thly, *Consolation*, where it is required in consequence of affliction. Stir up my own sympathies for the person or family, both on account of the affliction itself, and their spiritual welfare as connected with it. Endeavour to know, as nearly as may be, the state of their minds in reference to it, whether they have any

real resignation to the will of God, any true impression of the necessity of *humbling themselves under his mighty hand* ; and especially, whether they possess any solid ground of religious comfort. Both before and at the time [let me] lift up my heart in prayer to God, that he may enable me to speak to them *a word in season.*”

From the warm interest he discovered in the spiritual welfare of the young at earlier periods of his life, the reader will expect to find, that now, when invested with the pastoral office, he was not inattentive to the same interesting class. With this anticipation his conduct did not fail to correspond. In the memorandum relating to “ Congregational business,” he mentions “ Classes for the Young ;” and we are informed that he did frequently meet with young people for their religious instruction, divided into a variety of classes according to their age and progress. His assistance was also cheerfully given to a large Sabbath school, consisting of children belonging to the various religious denominations in Whithorn. This school, it is stated, was originally opened by the Rev. Christopher Nicholson, minister of the parish church there, who superintended it during the seasons of summer and autumn. It being discontinued on his part for about six months, in winter and spring, the late Rev. Gavin Rowatt took it up during these months, and cordially accepted the co-operation of Mr Gardner, who, in a letter of date February 14, 1833, adverts to it as follows :—“ We are resolved to make a vigorous effort for the improvement of our very large school. We have at present about 212

scholars, and thirty teachers, fourteen of whom are females." Favourable notice is taken of this school in the "Annual Report of the Sabbath School Union for Scotland, 1832." *

Few could manifest greater readiness than he to co-operate, as far as practicable, with good men of other persuasions, in any religious and philanthropic institution. He preached a sermon, by request, for the Bible Society of Whithorn, a few weeks before his ordination. Mr Rowatt having instituted "a Society for Religious Purposes," the chief object of which was to provide funds for the education of poor children, while assistance might be afforded to any religious society the members thought fit to aid, he frankly took part with that excellent minister in advancing the interests of this institution. At the beginning of the year 1832, he established at the same time, "Whithorn Secession Missionary Society," whose object was the propagation of the gospel at home and abroad, in connexion with the United Associate Synod. Near the commencement of the following year, he says in a letter, "Our congregational Secession Missionary Society met to-day. The subscriptions for the year amounted to rather more than L.11, 8s.—pretty well to be raised at a half-penny a week in so small a congregation." Aware of the importance of social prayer in connexion with contributions for the diffusion of the truth, he esta-

* "118—WHITHORN. The school here, under the superintendence of the Rev. John Henry Gardner and the Rev. Gavin Rowatt, is now attended by 204 scholars."—*Sixteenth Annual Report*, &c. p. 43.

blished a monthly prayer-meeting, to be held as regularly as possible on the first Monday of the month.—“ Yesterday,” he says in a letter dated March 5, 1833, “ I had the monthly prayer-meeting. I began a course of cursory expositions on the acts of the Apostles. I went over the first half of the first chapter.”

Villages where no place of worship exists, and of whose inhabitants some are unable, and others unwilling, to travel a few miles to attend one, attracted his attention and excited his pity. Had the state of his health admitted of it, he would have made more frequent excursions for the purpose of preaching in villages of this description. One attempt of the kind he thus describes in a letter to a friend, of date August 31, 1832 :—“ I preached last Sabbath evening at the Isle of Whithorn, out of doors, namely, in a wood-yard, which was the only place that could hold the congregation that assembled. The people sat upon logs. I stood on two short and thick pieces of wood, close to the end of a house which sheltered me tolerably well from the keen autumnal evening air. I preached from Isaiah xxviii. 17, ‘ The hail shall sweep away your refuges of lies.’ It is the first time I have preached there. Mr Rowatt goes twice a-year or so. There is no place of worship in the village, and it is three miles from Whithorn. But alas ! a small part only, I suspect, of my audience consisted of those persons for whom such occasional services are chiefly needful.”

His memoranda contain repeated allusions to the business of the Presbytery of Wigton, some parts of

which, during the short period of his connexion with it, were sufficiently troublesome and vexatious. He thought himself happy, however, in his co-presbyters, and mentions them in terms of sincere esteem. In assisting them, and his fathers and brethren of other Presbyteries, as he had opportunity, in administering the Lord's Supper, he felt much pleasure. His presence and services were not a little valued on their part, and that of their congregations. Having been employed to preach at the ordination of a promising missionary, born and educated within the bounds of his Presbytery, he refers to it in his Diary in the following words :—" *Whithorn, Oct. 3, 1831.* My friend Mr Cowan was licensed here, at the time of our sacrament, three weeks ago. He was ordained on Monday the 10th October at Glenluce. Mr Puller presided. I preached. John Simpson was also ordained as a missionary on Tuesday last ; and is also going to Jamaica. O that their zeal may provoke very many to go far hence to the Gentiles. May it provoke me to be diligent at home."

He found himself stimulated to diligence in his master's service, not only by the example of the living, but by various new instances of mortality that occurred in the circle comprehending some of his kindest and most esteemed friends.

He seems to have been considerably affected by the remembrance of his worthy predecessor, for whom he conceived a great regard, from the interviews he had with him during the time he spent in his house, on occasion of his first visit to Whithorn. The fol-

lowing account of what passed when he accompanied Mrs Smith to see the monument generously erected by the congregation to commemorate his worth, displays a tenderness of feeling, entirely in keeping with a sincere veneration for his memory. In a letter to a friend of date July 3, 1832, he says, "I went with Mrs S. to see the monument for the first time. I could not find in my heart to say much to her. It seemed as if it would be a kind of sacrilege to break the silence of such a scene. After gazing a long time on the beautiful stone, (it is well worthy of the use to which it is dedicated,) and on the *new* grave, she turned down towards the lower part of the churchyard, saying, 'I have still an affection for this spot;' and we went together to the place where the body had lain upwards of two years. From that she turned to visit the grave of a sister, Dr B——t's mother. As we went up again, she paused once more at the monument, and then apparently with a great effort bade it adieu."

In the inscription of this monument, which was composed by the late Rev. John Robertson of Stranraer, Mr Smith is characterised as a man who, "by extensive and accurate knowledge as a divine—devoted piety and desire to win souls to Christ—and by diligence, fidelity, and affection, tempered by a sound judgment, and much practical wisdom in the discharge of his duty as the pastor of a congregation, and a member of Church courts—made full proof of his ministry." Though Mr Robertson was prevented by the hand of death from fulfilling his intention, in writing a particular account of this valued

co-presbyter, his lack of service has been recently supplied by a surviving friend and contemporary.* We shall do no discredit to Mr Smith's memory, by inserting here the views of his character formed by his youthful successor, after enjoying the pleasure of his company for a few days, as communicated to an uncle a short time after his return to Edinburgh, in a letter of Dec. 12, 1829.

" You have probably heard of my arrival from Galloway. I preached the two last Sabbaths of November for Mr Smith of Whithorn, who is now so unwell that he gets regular supply of sermon. His illness is a kind of inflammation in his tongue, which is the cause of great pain, and makes it difficult also for him to speak so distinctly as to be heard. He is rather a singular man, and on first meeting with him one scarcely knows what to make of him. But by degrees his real character begins to appear, and he gained so much on me while I was living in his house, that I left him with no other sentiment than that of very high esteem and reverence. Notwithstanding the pain that he feels, especially when eating or speaking, he never once mentions or complains of it; and you would not imagine he was suffering materially at all, unless by particular questions regarding his ailment, you force him to explain it to you. He is remarkably polite and benevolent in his manners, though his appearance is rough. You may perhaps wonder why I say so much about Mr Smith;

* See "Memoir of the late Rev. John Smith of Whithorn," in the United Secession Magazine for October 1835, pp. 445—454.

but my reason for doing so was, that I thought it would please you to hear so much good of an aged servant of Christ."

Whether the youth or the man of gray hairs became the victim of death, John Henry stood prepared to receive instruction. Having observed a public announcement of the decease of a young cousin at a distance, he says, Sept. 4, 1831, "Providence has given me another warning still; let me remember the family particularly this evening in prayer." A few months after, he thus adverts to the death of a student:—"I read in the newspaper to-day the death of David M'Murtrie, one of our students at Stranraer, which took place on the 13th December. O my soul, awake, and watch and pray!"

Hardly any bereaving stroke, however, could have made a more powerful impression on his mind, than that by which the REV. MR BROWN of Whitburn, for whom he cherished a truly filial reverence and love, was removed from the presence of his relatives and friends on earth. His emotions on receiving the first intelligence of this affecting event, are expressed in the following passage of his Journal:—

"WHITHORN, *Sabbath Evening, March 18, 1832.*
—Since writing the above, I have been made a second time fatherless. My dear and venerable friend, Mr Brown of Whitburn, went to receive his reward on Friday the 10th of February, after having been struck with palsy the Sabbath week previous. He was deprived almost entirely of speech, but not at all of thought and recollection. Sometimes he broke out in that sweet tone which he used in preaching, say-

ing such things as the following—‘ O the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in times of trouble.’ —‘ My God my glory.’ For a day or two he expressed considerable doubts as to his state, and said, ‘ I fear it is all delusion with me.’ In the evening, however, Jane heard him saying, ‘ I’ll flee to the blood of Jesus, the precious blood of Jesus, as I have ever done, and all the devils in hell shall not hinder me.’

“ The family appear to have been wonderfully supported under a bereavement so trying. They are not blind to the many alleviating circumstances which accompany it. He had to all appearance little bodily pain, and enjoyed almost uninterrupted peace of mind, having his heart staid on God. He was *fully ripe*. He had served the Redeemer in the gospel more than fifty-four years—had served him with no common diligence, and not without much success. Why then should Heaven be grudging one of its citizens, to whom it might lay so good a claim?

“ As for me, alas ! I am amazed at myself, that I have been so little affected by this bereavement. I am sure I loved Mr Brown as I would have loved my own father, had he been spared until I came to years of manhood. I am sure I prized in some degree his affectionate interest in my welfare, and his many prayers for me. And I am sure I sympathize with Mrs Brown and the whole family in their distress. And yet, how easily have I been able to get my attention fixed upon trifles light as air. * * *

“ But a still more alarming dispensation of Providence,” he adds, “ has occurred at my own door, and

only last Sabbath. Our doorkeeper, *James Roger*, was smitten by the hand of God, just as he had laid the Bible upon the pulpit, and never showed (at least in a very few minutes after) the slightest symptom of remaining life. I cannot but feel thankful that the stroke has fallen upon one who seemed to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and with whom I trust all is well."

His retrospect of what passed at Whitburn, when he spent a few days there after the first meeting of Synod, (April 1832,) subsequent to Mr Brown's death, still farther discovers the sincerity of his regret, and his solicitude to reap spiritual advantage from this interesting event. "Spent part of my time in looking over Mr Brown's note-books, and trying to acquire the power of reading them with some measure of readiness, that (should it be thought advisable) I might transcribe a few of them for publication. I visited his grave alone. It was then I felt the thought of separation from him in all its reality. To be so near what was once called by his name, but what would not hear me or answer me any more, gave me feelings on the subject which I had not experienced in the same form before. I do not know if all the emotions that succeeded were those of faith and hope and contrition, but at least I trust they were not altogether mere natural feelings resembling these devotional sentiments. I deplored before the God of my father, whom he so faithfully served, the sad misimprovement I had made of his affectionate and weighty counsels, and the beautiful example which so tenderly enforced

and recommended them. I dedicated myself anew to that same Master, whose work he found so exceeding great a reward, and the full recompense of which I at that moment felt, more than ever, to be one of surpassing magnitude and glory. I thought of the Apostle Peter's words, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope.'

Had the limits of this memoir permitted, a variety of extracts might have been produced from the sympathizing and consolatory letters which he addressed to Mrs Brown, and other members of the family, on occasion of this afflicting bereavement. We must satisfy ourselves, however, with a few sentences from a letter to one of his daughters, written a few weeks after the event, and a consoling communication addressed to Mrs Brown, on the second anniversary of her beloved husband's death.—“Since your father's departure,” says he, March 13, 1832, “from this sinful and imperfect world, in which we are still left, I have been looking out and frequently gazing upon whatever little memorials of him I have got beside me. One of these is his *Means of Doing Good*, a copy of which he gave me in May last. O that I could imbibe a portion of the spirit which dictated it, and put its principles and recommendations in practice, as thoroughly and perseveringly as he himself did. Another of the memorials to which I refer, are several of the last letters I received from your father. I have kept all his letters I think, however short or to whatever they related, for I always felt that there

was something characteristic in them, which forbade me to lose sight of them."

"WHITHORN, *Feb.* 14, 1833.

"MY DEAR MRS BROWN,—I have not forgotten that last Sabbath was the 10th of February. I trust the Lord has carried you through this trying season, and proportioned your strength to your day.

"When speaking of Elijah's mantle, Matthew Henry beautifully observes, that 'there are remains of great and good men, which, like this mantle, ought to be gathered up, and preserved by their survivors; their sayings, their writings, their examples, that as their works follow them in the reward of them, they may stay behind them in the benefit of them.' You will receive along with this a few more sheets of the sermons which I am transcribing. They are all fraught with the spirit of him whom God has taken from our head; a spirit of simplicity and godly sincerity. I cannot help adding another remark of Mr Henry's on the fruitless search made by the sons of the prophets for Elijah; 'traversing hills and valleys will never bring us to Elijah, but the imitation of his holy faith and zeal will in due time.' Blessed be God that we know he is the Lord God of Elijah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and not the God of the dead but of the living. Thus we have hope concerning them that sleep in Jesus, and hope also for ourselves; let us therefore endeavour to say, the Lord liveth, blessed be our Rock! His being alive and unchangeable, is the infallible pledge of our unbroken union with our departed friends. 'We all live unto him.' And how then can we say, that in

every sense, or in the most important sense, they are dead to us. We see them not, it is true, and listen not to their sweet voices, uttering now the language of devout affection toward our own God and Father, and again that of deep and sympathizing kindness toward ourselves, in the hour of joy and that of darkness ; but neither do we see our Father in Heaven, and our Elder Brother there, in whom believing, nevertheless, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Our religion, while we live on earth, is *out and out* a religion of faith and hope ; the blessings it bestows, are all either foretastes of what is promised hereafter, or pledges of and preparatives for the better things to come. Why then should we refuse the influence of faith and hope in regard to those beloved ones whom we can no longer find on earth ? It is by faith and patience they have reached the better country, where their inheritance of promise awaited them. By faith and patience it is that we shall ere long (each in his own, and that the best possible order) join them. Surely they have not forgotten us. It seems almost too presumptuous to imagine that those who yet dwell in houses of clay should be objects of memory and solicitude to the kings and priests of God who serve him day and night in his temple, until we remember that our Great High Priest himself, the object of their unceasing adoration, thus thinks of and cares for us. Surely those who had so much of the mind of Christ even here, cannot have lost their likeness to him in this respect, now that they see him as he is. In the grave, indeed, there is no knowledge ; their hatred and their love is lost ;

but it is not in the grave that the objects of our affection are. There are their mantles of clay, to be resumed in due time in a better, and more beautiful, and more lasting form ; but it is the unclothed spirits that are themselves, and these are ‘ spirits made perfect ’—spirits with whom we have even now much in common, and to whom we shall soon still more closely (I trust) and more literally come.

“ My prayer for you is, that He who has, during the past year, (the most mournful of your life,) in so many ways proved his faithfulness and love, may keep you and bless you all your life long.”

The Rev. Mr Smith, in his excellent “ Memoir of Mr Brown,” introduces a quotation from a letter addressed to him by “ one who enjoyed no small measure of his friendly regard,” in which he describes the piety and tenderness that characterised the expressions of Mr Brown’s friendship, particularly towards young persons, pages 145, 146. Mr Gardner is the individual there alluded to.

The impression which Mr Brown’s decease made upon his mind, was not only vivid but lasting. In a letter addressed to an uncle, February 6, 1833, he adverts to that bereavement in the following terms : “ It will be a year on Sabbath first since Mr Brown’s death. As we advance in life, how the year gets crowded with anniversaries, fraught with painful and melancholy recollections ! Would that they might prove more of an arousing and animating character than they too generally are. Surely there is much that is not only painful, but highly calculated to cheer

and encourage us in remembering those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

When the last enemy directed his shafts against his own contemporaries in the Christian ministry, he felt the admonition coming home with peculiar force. Hence on Saturday evening, September 15, 1832, he adverts to the death of a young minister, equally distinguished for talents and unaffected piety and modesty, in the following terms:—"Yesterday I read in the newspaper a notice of the death of my junior fellow-student, Mr Alexander Nisbet of Edinburgh, who has been cut off at an age which I have already past, and after a ministry even briefer than my own. On reading this, my impression was, Let me watch and be ready also."

The sudden death of another young minister, though of a different persuasion, very deeply impressed his susceptible heart. We refer to his worthy neighbour, friend and coadjutor in the works of Christian benevolence mentioned above, the REV. GAVIN ROWATT, pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation of Whithorn, who, after an illness of scarcely three days, died there on the 2d November 1832, in the thirtieth year of his life, and seventh of his ministry. The great esteem he felt for this highly gifted, public spirited, and amiable minister, is strongly expressed in an account of his death and character, which he prepared for the Edinburgh Theological Magazine.* A somewhat ampler tribute to his memory, contained in the Report of the "Whithorn Society for Religious

* See Vol. 7th of that Periodical, Pp. 642, 643.

Purposes ;” which was drawn up by the Rev. J. H. Gardner of Whithorn, may be seen in another periodical.*

With these public testimonies to the worth of this beloved friend, and to the efficiency of his public labours, his private memoranda fully accord. In his Diary he expresses himself as follows :—

“ WHITHORN, *Wednesday Evening, November 7th, 1832.*—To-day I have been called, in the inscrutable providence of God, to do what I never expected to do, much less to do so soon. I have followed to the narrow house the mortal remains of my highly valuable and beloved friend and fellow-labourer, Mr Rowatt. Only yesterday-week I spent more than an hour with him, talking about a variety of details ; one of which was the means of promoting the efficiency of the Sabbath School. He seemed to me quite well, and in excellent spirits. How was I astounded, therefore, on receiving on Sabbath morning, while at Stranraer, a note from Mr Symington announcing his death. He had felt ill, it seems, before I left him. He expired between one and two P. M. on Friday. The Lord pity all whom he has by this affecting dispensation bereaved and left desolate. May he pity me, whom he has bereaved of a friend, whose example and aid and agreeable society, might (humanly speaking) have proved of such inestimable service to me. O to spend and be spent as he. May his fervent charity, his unwearied exertion, his firm resolution, be my never-to-be-forgotten models. May

* The Scottish Advocate of Scriptural Principles in Religion, Morals, and Politics, No. 2, January 1833, Pp. 79, 80.

my life and my last end be like his. His life was all activity, his end was peace."

"WHITHORN, *Sabbath Evening, Nov. 11, 1832.*—God has had mercy on me, and strengthened me with at least bodily vigour for the discharge of the trying duties of this day. I thought, however, my feelings would have entirely overcome me during the first prayer. The last time I was in my pulpit, my lamented friend was in his. But after beginning the sermon, my mind got composed, and continued so, with little exception, to the very end. I preached first, from 'Well done thou good and faithful servant;' and then from 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' I can hardly yet believe the loss I have sustained. It seems too great and awful to be real. I sometimes almost fondly imagine I shall yet again see his kind smiling countenance, and go to the Sabbath school in company with him. The dread truth, however, again forces itself upon me, and I find I am friendless and alone. O my blessed Lord, to whom I have been so unprofitable a servant hitherto, enable me henceforth to occupy my two talents with the same diligence with which he occupied his five; or bestow on me more grace and strength than I have had as yet conferred upon me, and give me greater wisdom to use it all. Let me no more please myself. Let me no more tremble at the opinion of the world. Let me no more be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. I have now much of his work to perform as well as my own. What increased activity, then, must characterise me, if I would not incur utter failure and shame. Strengthen thou me,

O Lord, with strength inwardly and outwardly also, and then I shall not be afraid of the magnitude of the work thou assignest me.

“ Mr Symington preached, I understand, from ‘ Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.’ I remember of Mr Rowatt and me conversing on this passage after his father’s death.”*

Various letters addressed to relatives and friends, shortly after this interesting breach, breathe the same sentiments of piety and friendship ; of which we give a short specimen in the two following extracts :—

In a letter to his brother-in-law, dated Nov. 5, 1832, after stating the particulars of Mr Rowatt’s death, he adds, “ He preached Sabbath before last for the Sabbath-school, when I heard him for the first time, and was very much gratified by having enjoyed the opportunity of listening to his clear and interesting illustrations of Divine truth. I have lost an invaluable neighbour and fellow-labourer. I cannot calculate the loss which the religious public in our district have met with in the death of one who was foremost in every good work. My responsibility and labour will now be both very much increased. I mean with respect to the Sabbath-school, the Missionary Society,” &c.

A letter to his mother, written a few days after, supplies a few particulars, which serve to indicate the deep and general regret felt at the death of this promising minister, hurried to the grave in the full career of his usefulness. “ My poor friend is buried

* His excellent father, the late Rev. Mr Rowatt of Penpont, died only a few months before.

at the back of his own meeting-house. The funeral was very large, and the people visibly affected by the sadness of the occasion. Some of the Sabbath-school children were crying bitterly. All the shops were shut."

The last instance of mortality particularly noticed in his journal, is that of DR JOHN DICK of Glasgow, whom he mentions in terms of sincere veneration and regret, in an entry written precisely two months before his own dissolution :—

"WHITHORN, *Sabbath Evening, Feb. 10, 1833.*
—Dr Dick, my venerated teacher, died very suddenly on the 25th January. He had presided at a meeting of the Glasgow Anti-slavery Society only two days previous. Many of his pupils died before him, some of them never being permitted, in the adorable providence of God, to enter upon their ministerial work ; such as Watson, Fleming, M'Murtrie, &c. ; while others of them had just done enough in that work to excite the hopes of the Church, regarding their long, and happy, and useful career, such as Gray, Fisher, Nisbet, Robertson, &c. Did I, under his instruction, well digest, as I ought to have done, the invaluable prelections which he read to his students, and the judicious observations which he made in criticising the discourses ? Have I, since my license and ordination, rightly divided the word of truth, like a workman who needs not to be ashamed ? Alas ! how shall he give in his account of me ; with joy or with grief ?"

In a letter to a friend, written Feb. 14, after advertising to Dr Dick's sudden death, he thus continues :—

“O may all the Doctor’s pupils follow him in the gravity which becomes Christian bishops, and in that beautiful and simple style of exhibiting the truths of the gospel, of which he set so eminent an example. I try to aim at simplicity and great plainness of speech, but often I am conscious of miserably failing. Yet I am convinced that the truly dignified style of preaching is that which Dr Dick exemplified, in his entire reliance for the effect of his discourses upon the clear, plain, and well-arranged statement of truth. There was seldom any thing like *passion* in his writing, but I do not think there was *coldness*. Both his composition and his manner seemed to me to indicate a mind honestly wishing to communicate weighty and useful instruction. If he had had a little more physical energy, he would have been a very eloquent preacher.”

Another letter of nearly the same date contains the following passage :—“Dr Dick’s death must have been very sudden. To many young men he has entrusted that precious seed which they will sow far and wide, now that he himself is called home to his reward. But not a few of his pupils have gone before him to the eternal world. Some of them I knew and loved well ; such as David Waterston at Whitburn, David Fleming, [at Drumaird, Kennoway,] Mr Nisbet, and Mr Robertson.”

Touching admonitions conveyed by the death of beloved friends, were no doubt heard with the greater intensity of feeling, in consequence of the manifest feebleness of his own frame. The varied labours

and unremitting solicitude connected with the pastoral office, particularly in the first stage of its exercise, were but ill adapted to a constitution far from robust. For a short time before his settlement, he had suffered considerably from cold and fatigue, and not many months after it, a renewal of similar ailments excited his apprehensions. Accordingly, in a portion of his Diary, dated Jan. 4, 1832, he speaks of the “warnings I have got, in the death of several acquaintances and relatives, especially Mr Stewart of Downpatrick, aunt Margaret in Inverness, and Donald William Dewar; as well as the symptoms of mortality, *the harbingers of an early death*, that have unequivocally showed themselves in my own constitution.”

“Mr David Coutts,” he adds, “preached for me on the third and last Sabbaths of December, and also part of the thanksgiving day, which was on the Thursday between. His company did me a great deal of good, in the way of keeping up my spirits. * * * My symptoms, cough, expectoration, and uneasiness in the chest, though none of them very aggravated, yet have rather increased as otherwise, in consequence of which I have, by Dr Taylor’s advice, been endeavouring to spare and take care of myself since the beginning of December. I have still gone on, however, with my family visitation to a certain extent, not finding that I am injured by this duty, provided I take it in moderation, and the day be favourable, but, on the contrary, I sometimes feel better after it.”

In a letter to his sister, dated Dec. 5, 1831, he says, “I thought it my indispensable duty to tell my Session the true state of the case yesterday, and I

mean on Sabbath first to make a similar statement to the congregation, both that I may have their prayers, and that they may not think uncharitably of me, as if I were lazy, should I abridge my labours. The session received the statement evidently with much friendship and sympathy, and expressed their willingness to provide help for me, now and then, when it could be had." His letters to his mother on the same occasion, are worthy of his amiable spirit. While he regretted the want of her company, he expresses his gratitude to the excellent relict of his predecessor, with whom he boarded during the whole period of his ministry, in the following terms:—"Mrs Smith continues, however, to supply your place to the utmost of her power, for which I cannot be sufficiently thankful to the Author of every good and perfect gift. The people were much affected when I told them of my illness." After alluding to a letter he had addressed to his friend, the Rev. Dr Taylor of Auchtermuchty, requesting his opinion and advice relative to his health, he thus earnestly solicits the prayers of his mother:—"Alas, that these warnings of mortality have so little effect in weaning me from the hopes of this world, and so little in quickening my activity in my Master's work! O do grant me your prayers, that God may spare and strengthen me, but above all, that he may sanctify and cleanse me."

An entry in his Diary, dated March 18, 1832, contains the following notice of his infirmities, and their salutary effect:—"As to my health, Dr Broadfoot, and some others of my friends, seem to regard it as in a tolerable state, though still requiring care. I am

now convinced, indeed, that it is not decidedly worse than it was during last summer. But, at all events, whatever ground there was for solicitude on this head then, it continues unabated still. I have a frame of very delicate texture, which *may* unexpectedly give way, for any thing I can foresee. Possibly, however, God may intend many days for me in the land of the living, and only lets me feel my weakness at present, that I may be thoroughly roused to work while it is called to-day. His chastisement, I trust, has not been utterly useless. It has made me somewhat more diligent in calling for my people in private. Its influence, however, has (with respect to my heart at least) been, after all, very slight. O my God, I ask not of thee to spare me that I may recover strength, if this be not consistent with thy wise designs. I know thou hast many and far fitter instruments thou couldst employ in my stead, though thou shouldst instantly remove me from the field of operation in which I act so reluctantly and slothfully. I know that, in point of justice, thou mightst say to me, ‘Thou mayest be no longer steward.’ But, O Father of mercies, save me from my own heart’s lusts. Save me from the power of my spiritual foes. O let me not perish utterly. To whom can I go? Lord, I may have deceived myself hitherto, in imagining I had fled for refuge to thy mercy. Yet I will venture to flee once more. Never had I more need. O shut me not out now. I am fit fuel, I confess, for thine everlasting wrath; yet O pluck me as a brand out of the burning.”

His session and congregation tenderly sympathized

with him in his ailments, and pretty frequently obtained preachers, during the course of this winter, to relieve him from the labours of the pulpit. In compliance with the urgent advice of a medical man, to whose friendship he was much indebted, they farther consented to his taking a journey northward, as soon as the weather permitted, and spending five or six weeks of nearly complete relaxation among his relatives and friends. Part of this season of comparative repose was spent at Kennoway, where, agreeably to the arrangement, he also gave some assistance to his uncle in the administration of the Lord's Supper on the last Sabbath of May. His services on that occasion were marked not only by talent, but by a peculiar solemnity of manner, as was observed particularly on the Sabbath evening, when he preached a most impressive sermon from Philippians, i. 23, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better."

By the kindness of Providence, he reached home on the Thursday before the second Sabbath of June, in an improved state of health, and with much alacrity resumed his pastoral efforts. Besides administering the Lord's Supper to his people on the first Sabbath of July, and assisting four or five brethren of his Presbytery in the services of the same solemnity, he continued to perform the various duties of the ministry, public and private, with little or no interruption, till shortly after the death of his friend, Mr Rowatt. On the 24th December, owing to repeated fatigue and exposure, he was seized with inflammation of the throat, which for some time wore

a threatening aspect, and prevented him for three Sabbaths from appearing in the pulpit.

“ It is of the Lord’s mercies,” he says in his Journal, Tuesday morning, December 25, 1832, “ I am not consumed. Why should a living man complain? My affliction has been much gentler than in the case of many others similarly affected. Besides, I have every comfort, and a most kind and affectionate nurse, and many to offer prayers every day on my behalf. I have not been so much engaged in humbling myself before God as I ought. On Sabbath evening, I was much affected, however, in thinking of my need of chastisement, and the various ways in which God has already chastised me, but (owing to my own obstinacy) with very little effect. O my God, help me to exercise patience, and then do thou with me whatever seems good in thy sight. Only let it be good for me that I am afflicted ; let me learn thereby thy holy law.” In some following entries, he laments his fretfulness and other sins, praises God for the recovering goodness again shown him, and for all the mercies of the year 1832, now come to a close, and expresses ardent gratitude to those who attended him during his illness, as well as unaffected surprise at the interest generally felt in his welfare by the inhabitants of Whithorn.

“ *Thursday evening, December 27, 1832.*—I am still confined to my room. Let me patiently humble myself under God’s mighty hand, and *in due time* he will exalt me. I have been often guilty of both feeling and speaking hastily and peevishly, which I am sorry for. The people are most attentive in their

inquiries, as well as many not at all connected with our congregation. Surely I had no good reason to expect, from my general character, nor the way in which I have discharged my public duties, that the interest felt and expressed regarding my present illness would have been what it is. I have been in great danger of being lifted up with pride, and yet, on the other hand, I can hardly help shedding tears for very shame at the respect and kindness displayed towards me. Let me be encouraged by the knowledge I have thus acquired, however, to greater diligence and boldness in the work of Christ, should it seem good to Him to restore me to the labours of his vineyard."

"*Monday Evening, December 31.*—Yesterday, Mr Hannay preached to my people from Ephesians i. 6, 'He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.'—1832 is just about to close. I am not able at present to reflect closely and consecutively enough, to take an accurate survey of all the mercies I have received, and the sins I have committed; but of this I am convinced at the slightest glance, that both are more in number than the sand on the sea-shore. O Lord, if thou hast any use for so unprofitable a servant during another year, I look to thee for all the help and grace which I will need, to enable me to watch, and pray, and labour more abundantly than I have hitherto done."

"*WHITHORN, Tuesday Evening, January 1, 1833.*—God has graciously marked the beginning of this year with a token of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering. Would that I were as sure of its

being a token of fatherly favour! I rested well last night, and feel much relieved both of pain in the throat and the accompanying sickness. The mercy is enhanced in value by the joy it has occasioned to those kind friends who have so unweariedly waited upon me during my illness—Mrs Smith, Miss Hannay, and Ritchie Kelly. How shall I ever repay them? But I trust they shall in no wise lose their reward.

“ Mr Nicholson called for me this afternoon, which is one happy result of my indisposition. May God grant me wisdom to improve, in a prudent and Christian manner, the intercourse with him, of which his present kindness is likely to be but the beginning.”

Letters addressed to relatives during this affliction, and soon after its removal, manifest a becoming concern to profit by the rod, and by the Lord's delivering mercy. Thus, in one dated December 27, 1832, after stating the particulars of his illness, and mentioning the great kindness of those around him, he continues—“ I am afraid I am too anxious about getting better; more so than about receiving wisdom from the rod and reproof. One thing I trust I have in some measure learned, namely, that a much higher rate of religion than we generally aim at, is necessary to support the mind in perfect peace in the day of affliction. I feel my mind so carnal, so little habituated to close and spiritual intercourse with heaven, that my time often hangs heavy on my hand when I am not able to read, and have no person to talk to me. O could I in good earnest set myself to the

prosecution of higher things—of a more vigorous faith in unseen realities—of a more sensitive recollection of God's presence and holiness—and of a more lively and child-like trust in him—then might I rejoice that I have been afflicted, and glory in tribulations. I shall not look back with a grudge on the pain of the furnace, if any sensible portion of the dross and tin shall prove to have been taken away by Him who now sits as a refiner over me."

Writing to his brother-in-law, January 22, 1833, he says—"I write only a short and hurried letter to inform you that I am now in my ordinary state of health. Blessed be God who has redeemed my life from destruction, and healed my diseases!—I preached Sabbath before last without being the worse for it. By the end of last week, I felt quite well, and got through the work of the Sabbath with as little fatigue, perhaps, as I ever remember to have felt. I was quite able to read a good part of the evening to Mrs Smith, who was not very able to read for herself. I have no intention, however, of throwing aside a moderate care of my health during the winter season. It is a blessing too precious, and too precarious, to put to unnecessary peril."

In a letter to the younger of his two uncles in the ministry, of date February 6, 1833, referring both to his own late indisposition, and a severe illness from which that relative also had been mercifully recovered, he makes the following remarks on the wise and salutary purposes which the afflictions of ministers are fitted to serve:—

"Ministers have perhaps more need of chastise-

ment than other Christians. There is that in our office which, if it do not produce in us a higher and purer tone of devout sentiment than is experienced by the average of ordinary Christians, is but too likely to have quite the opposite effect, and sink us in this respect even below the ordinary level. I ought not, indeed, to measure my fathers and brethren by myself; but I think I can gather as much as I have now expressed from what I have heard and read of the mental history of pious ministers. Surely if *that which is so good* in itself may be made, not *death* indeed, but a source of much evil and discomfort to us, through our liability to neglect to improve and follow up our high advantage, in being always conversant with the business of eternity in one way or other,—it is safe for ourselves, and a proof of tender care and wise judgment on the part of our Divine Master, that we should not escape our own full share, at least, of the sorrows and afflictions of this present evil world. We need such shocks at times, to break up that false tranquillity which so easily steals over the mind, when every day employed about the service of God and the spiritual improvement of mankind. They remind us of what we are so ready to lose sight of—the reality of religion, as a thing that *as* nearly concerns us as any of our hearers.”

About this time also, he resumed his much-loved work of teaching the young. “I have been doing,” says he, Sabbath evening, March 3, 1833, “what I could to improve the order and efficiency of the Sabbath-school. I find that my bodily strength is hardly

equal to the exertions that are necessary, after having done the ordinary duties of the Sabbath. I trust, however, that, by the blessing of God, what I have been able to do, and may yet do, will not be in vain."

The appointed period, however, of all his labours was rapidly approaching its close. "The harbingers of early death" gave no uncertain sound; and his own apprehensions were too well justified by the mournful event. At the very moment when he was almost overjoyed by the prospect of again recruiting his health and spirits by interviews with his beloved relatives and friends, and with his dear fathers and brethren at their synodical meeting in Glasgow, he was seized with a violent complaint, which speedily overwhelmed his delicate frame, and brought him to his long home.

In a letter to his brother-in-law, of April 1, 1833, he gave notice of his intentions in the following terms:—"I have determined to be at the Synod; and as I had the offer of a gratis day, (the second Sabbath of April,) and the session being willing to provide supply for the third and fourth Sabbaths of the month, I intend leaving home this day week, taking the steam-boat to Glasgow, proceeding next day by coach to Alloa, and in the end of the week to Auchtermuchty and Kennoway. I expect thus to reach Edinburgh exactly a week after leaving Whit-horn. If you have an opportunity, you may mention to uncle Donald that I expect, unless something unforeseen occur, to spend the second Sabbath of this month at Kennoway."

But, ah, how fallacious are human hopes! How

often does "something unforeseen occur!" The joy with which the uncle anticipated the pleasure of once more seeing and hearing a nephew whom he loved as a son, and valued as a Christian whose maturity in grace far exceeded his years, was soon turned into sorrow. A few days before the arrival of that second Sabbath, he received the sad intelligence, first, of a new illness that obliged him to relinquish his design, and then of his sudden and lamented death.

We give his own account of the mortal distemper in a letter to his sister, which he wrote in bed on the morning of Monday the 8th of April, scarcely two days before his departure. "I think I told you in my last Edinburgh letter that I was complaining a little of a slight inflammation about the left ear. It increased towards the middle of last week, and still more towards the end of it. I have been afflicted with excruciating pains in the whole head, accompanied with a very severe bilious attack. Preaching yesterday was out of the question, and so we had no sermon. The worst night I have had was Saturday. I was nearly insensible the whole night; a blister was applied to my shoulder, but I had no conception of what was doing. I was bled near the ear with one leech on Friday, (because we could get no more,) and on Saturday by three. I trust I am permanently better to-day, though I must not be too sanguine. I am, as you will easily suppose, very weak. You will not be surprised when I tell you that I have given up all thought of going to the Synod at this time. When Providence may be pleased to allow me to visit my friends, I shall not at present attempt to conjecture."

This we believe was the last letter he ever wrote. It was speedily followed by a mournful and sympathizing communication from Mr Robert H. Smith to his brother-in-law, from which we quote the following extract :—

“ *Whithorn, April 10, 1833.*

“ MY DEAR SIR—It is with feelings of the most painful nature that I have to communicate to you the melancholy tidings of Mr Gardner’s death, which took place this morning a little before four. He wrote you on Monday morning, giving you an account, as I understood, of his illness up to that time. He was then considerably better, though weak. The pain had quit-
ted his head, and there was an abatement of sickness. He seemed on the whole to be improving up to last night about eleven, when matters took a very sudden and unexpected turn. He then became insensible, and remained in that state till his departure. There was nothing like a struggle—‘ he fell asleep.’

“ From the time of his first complaining, my cousin, Dr Broadfoot, attended him. As soon as the disease assumed a more serious appearance, the other two medical gentlemen in town were called in, and nothing was left undone which could be suggested to remove or alleviate the complaint. They seem inclined to think that his disease must have been allied to hydrocephalus, [dropsy in the head.]

“ We all sincerely sympathize with you in this severe trial which it has pleased the Lord to measure out to you, and trust that he will apportion the supply of his grace to your need. One abundant source

of consolation you have, in the assurance that you sorrow not as those that have no hope."

On the 9th May, Mrs Smith had the kindness to write a letter to his mother, containing a minute statement of circumstances attending the last illness and death of her son. To this source we are chiefly indebted for the following particulars.

The Sabbath eight days before his decease he occupied his pulpit as usual. The subject of his last lecture was the ministry of John the Baptist, as narrated in Luke iii. ; for, after expounding the whole epistle to the Philippians, he had begun lecturing on the gospel by Luke, and proceeded from its commencement to chapter iii. 19. His last three sermons related to the exceeding great and precious promises, with their blessed design and effects, 2 Peter i. 4, 5. On the evening of the Monday after that Sabbath, he presided at the monthly missionary prayer-meeting of the congregation. On the Tuesday evening he spent several hours at the school-house in examining the children, the expense of whose education was defrayed by the "Society for Religious Purposes." Part of Tuesday and Wednesday he employed in visiting some infirm and afflicted persons, whom he wished to converse and pray with before taking his intended journey. Meantime he found the pain in his ear increasing ; and on Thursday, being incapable of study, he endeavoured to entertain himself by various innocent means. After tea, "he sung, among other things, the whole of the 23d Psalm. He then said, What shall we flee to next ? I suppose we must return to the old

theme, to talk of absent friends. After that, talked seriously of religion ; repeated most of the epistle to the Ephesians, and some chapters of Romans." Friday morning he was no better, but came down stairs, and remained in the parlour almost the whole day. In the evening, after much persuasion, he made up his mind to warn the congregation of no sermon on Sabbath. Still spoke with pleasure of his journey in prospect, but beginning with reluctance to give up hopes of setting out on Monday. He said, "How foolish is it in us to talk of what we will do to-morrow, when we know not what a day may bring forth. We should say, if the Lord will, we will live and do this or that." On Saturday morning he came down to breakfast, but felt rather worse ; and subsequently, as has been stated, his trouble became somewhat alarming. On Monday he felt considerably relieved, but was compelled by his weakness to give up all thoughts of leaving home. When it was proposed that evening to write for his mother, he objected to this design, on the ground that she had been very poorly, and he was afraid she might come, however unable, and might suffer from exposure and cold in the journey. At his request an excellent nurse, who had waited on him for a time during his former illness, was now provided, when he thanked God for sending her to take care of him in his affliction, prayed that she might be no loser by her labour of love, prayed for his mother and all his relations and friends, for Mrs Smith and family, and for the congregation. He often talked with the nurse of the death of his sister Magdalene, and all the circumstan-

ces of it. A young girl attending his Sabbath school, having entered his apartment when stretched on the bed of languishing, he fixed his eyes on her, and told her to think of that Scripture, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

On Tuesday he felt considerably better, found his strength somewhat increased, and was considered free from every symptom of immediate danger. But let us hear, in her own words, Mrs Smith's interesting account of the scene which instantly followed, and of her intense feelings on that trying occasion :—

"After sitting a while, I went to take leave of him, as he was beginning to be drowsy. When parting I said to him, Jehovah hear thee in the day of trouble. Pressing my hand with peculiar earnestness, he replied, Oh that it may return upon you sevenfold! Some time after, Ritchie (the nurse) offered him a drink, which she had been preparing for him. He said he would not take it at present, as he was disposed to sleep; that he had been dreaming, but it was pleasant. He fell asleep immediately, and lay perfectly quiet for about half an hour, (till about eleven,) when Ritchie became alarmed by the quickness and loudness of his breathing, and alteration in his appearance. I got up with all possible speed, but alas what a change had taken place in so short a time! His eyes were fixed, his breathing laborious, his pulse very quick and weak. The doctors were in immediate attendance, but they could not stay his spirit. Our dear friend was now engaged in that warfare from which there is no discharge. He con-

tinued in the same way, motionless, with not a feature discomposed, till a little before four, when he departed without a struggle. But, my dear Mrs Gardner, I cannot express what I felt at that moment; how deeply I grieved for you at a distance, bereaved of an only son, and such a son too. None but they who knew his worth can appreciate the extent of your loss. I cannot express how much I sympathize with you, with Mrs Simpson, and with all his friends. It is indeed a great trial, but it is not unmixed with mercy. For you have the consolation of knowing that he was not a moment in bondage to the fear of death, and never experienced the bitterness of parting with those he held most dear; and, above every thing, you have the assured hope of his having joined the company of the redeemed from among men, and of his now enjoying the smiles of *his* countenance whom he loved and served—happiness, with which nothing here below can be compared. I trust God will send you help from his sanctuary, and comfort you against all grief on every side.

“ I cannot tell how much I feel the loss of Mr Gardner. What then must you feel? A son could not have been kinder than he was. He took an interest in all my little affairs, and sympathized with me in all my joys and sorrows. I need hardly say that his loss is deeply felt by the congregation, and all who had the happiness to know him. Mr Simpson would tell you that his grave is close to my husband's. My sister, and Robert, and I, visited it a few days ago.”

The funeral, which took place on Tuesday 16th April, was honoured by the presence of a number of clergymen, a large proportion of his own congregation, and Christians of other denominations in that vicinity, who respected his character, and deplored his premature decease. As in the case of Mr Rowatt, the inhabitants testified their regard for his memory by not opening their shops till the affecting ceremony was over.

Owing to the local distance and other causes, few of his relatives could do themselves the melancholy satisfaction to bear a part in the last sad offices due to humanity. Two of them, however, were present, namely, the same uncle who had accompanied him some years before in his trip to Ireland, and his brother-in-law. His mother, when the surprising and deeply afflicting intelligence of her son's being no more reached her, expressed a determination to go immediately to Whithorn. She was with difficulty persuaded, however, chiefly on account of the state of her own health at the time, to remain in Edinburgh, and to satisfy herself with the prospect of repairing at some future opportunity to see the spot where the valued remains of her son rest in peace, and in the blessed hope of a glorious resurrection. This prospect was afterwards realized. It pleased a gracious Providence to permit her to accomplish the much wished for, though mournful visit, in the autumn of the same year, when she experienced an attention and sympathy from the esteemed friends in whose house her son had resided and expired, and from

many other members of the congregation, which she can never forget. Far less would it become her to forget that Divine hand by which both she and her daughter were sustained under this sadly bereaving visitation. "The unexpected death of my beloved brother," says his sister, in a letter written only seven days after the event, "was indeed a severe stroke to my dear mother; and I need not tell you that both she and I are deeply afflicted. We have reason, however, to bless God that we have been supported almost beyond our expectation. Had we known that the desolating stroke was impending, we would have thought it insupportable; but God can support while he smites, and can bind up the heart which he has broken. We mourn, and deeply mourn, but I trust we do not murmur. O my dear uncle, it is hard for flesh and blood to part with one so justly dear to us; but his Saviour had a better right to him than we had, and we dare not repine."

Previous to the interment, it appears that death had not materially altered the appearance of his face. "If you have ever seen him asleep," says Mr F. in a letter written after his arrival at Whithorn, "or rather (for his eyes are a little open) making a pause in the time of prayer, then you will have some idea of the serene and placid expression of his countenance."

The body being deposited, as has been mentioned, hard by the mortal remains of his predecessor, it was deemed proper, alike by the congregation and by Mr Smith's family, that an inscription relative to Mr Gardner should be engraven on the same elegant

monument erected to commemorate the worth of that excellent man. It is as follows :—

THE REV. JOHN H. GARDNER,
SUCCESSOR TO THE REV. MR SMITH,
A YOUNG MAN OF GREAT PIETY, AMIABLENESS,
AND TALENT,
AFTER GIVING HIGH PROMISE OF USEFULNESS,
DIED, AFTER A SHORT ILLNESS, ON
THE 10TH APRIL 1833,
IN THE 26TH YEAR OF HIS AGE, AND THE
2ND OF HIS MINISTRY.

The Sabbath after the interment, the Rev. William Smellie of Stranraer, having kindly undertaken to officiate at Whithorn, addressed the congregation in discourses calculated to console their minds under the painful stroke which bereaved them of a young pastor equally loving and beloved, and to excite them to the right improvement of this instructive and trying visitation.

The announcement of Mr Gardner's sudden death was received with sincere regret by a wide circle of friends and acquaintance both among the clergy and laity. One sentiment of deep sympathy for his congregation and his relatives, especially his bereaved mother, appeared to pervade the bosoms of many ; of whom a number gave utterance to their feelings by means of personal calls or epistolary communication. From the numerous letters received on this mournful occasion, we shall present to the reader the few following extracts, which breathe alike a high esteem for the deceased, and unfeigned commiseration for the bereaved.

The first place seems due to the late Rev. John Robertson, at that time the father, as well as the clerk of the Presbytery of Wigton, who, in a letter dated Stranraer, 15th April 1833, addressed to Mr Robert H. Smith, with instructions to show it to his relatives, states his views of the loss sustained, in the following terms :—

“ His death will be felt as a heavy bereavement to the congregation, at a time, when, notwithstanding his delicate health, he gave such promise of being a most useful minister. It will be felt as a loss to the Presbytery, of which he was an active and conscientious, and likely to become an efficient member. I sincerely sympathize with his widowed mother, who will have to mourn the loss of an only son, who was every thing the fondest parent could wish—and with his numerous relatives, to whom he was deservedly dear. But the recollection of that excellence which chiefly adorned his character, will afford the most soothing reflection to surviving mourners—his deep-felt and habitual sense of religion.

“ For myself, I regret his loss most sincerely. I felt an interest in him beforehand for his father's sake ; and the more I knew of himself, my affection and esteem for him increased on his own account. The announcement of his death produced a great sensation here, especially in my congregation, who had always a warm regard for him. But the Lord had other designs, and it becomes us to bow with reverence to his will, and take it in the mean time as a solemn admonition to us to be also ready.”

The Rev. Dr Taylor of Auchtermuchty, to whom

he stood indebted for many acts of cordial friendship during his lifetime, addressed a very kind and consolatory letter to his mother, shortly after his death, part of which is as follows :—

“ It would assuredly be very unnatural for you, my dear Madam, not to be deeply afflicted. At the same time, I surely need not, in such a case, and writing to such a person, advert to the Apostle’s injunction, not to sorrow as those that have no hope. Our religion is one by which boasting is excluded, but one which calls on us also to acknowledge what Divine grace has done in the persons of our brethren ; and I believe all who knew our deceased friend, have a strong persuasion that he was not only a real, but an eminent Christian. If so, we are sure from Scripture, that it must have been not only gain for him to die, but gain so unspeakably great that you could not for a moment wish to withhold him from it, for the sake of any advantages you might have derived from his being continued here. This, I think, is a sound and strong argument for acquiescing in this dispensation, in addition to the paramount duty of submitting unreservedly to the will of the Lord.

“ He was doubtless exceedingly anxious to spend a life of usefulness in the service of his Redeemer. But I think we have good reason to hope that he may be engaged at present in a far higher department of Christian operation, in unspeakably more agreeable and advantageous circumstances, and with vastly greater success.

“ For yourself, you have not only this promise, that God will supply all your need ; but I hope you will

permit me to remind you, that Jesus, in the days of his flesh, especially manifested his compassion on occasion of the death of the only son of a widow. It is nothing to say that miracles are not now to be looked for ; Christ is always performing miracles of mercy to his people. Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God ; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

To these two extracts, we shall only add a short notice of him, contained in a letter addressed by his esteemed fellow-student, the Rev. Charles Johnston, to the Rev. John Tindal of Rathillet, bearing date Monkwearmouth, April 15th, 1833.

"I received a note this day from Edinburgh, announcing the death of the Rev. John Henry Gardner, Whithorn. He died on Wednesday last at four o'clock morning. He was licensed along with me to preach the gospel, and he was my intimate friend. We wrote to one another every three months. I received a letter from him last week, written by his own hand, within less than eight days of his death. I shall give you a sentence or two from his letter :— In reference to his former affliction he says, 'I fear the impression soon wore entirely off, and now I have perhaps more need than ever of being sent through the furnace. I trust my present ailments will not prevent me from attending the Synod, but it is possible I may be disappointed. We depend too much for happiness upon human friends.'—'Thurs-

day evening,' he says, ' My complaint is a great deal worse to-day ; but why should a living man complain ?'—" I believe," adds Mr Johnston, " that Mr Gardner was a sincere and devoted Christian, and I trust that he has exchanged the labours and troubles of life for a heavenly crown."

Having put the reader in possession of these testimonies to his worth, as well as detailed the leading particulars of his whole life, it seems now unnecessary for us to exhibit any lengthened delineation of his character. Let a few words suffice.—To excellent natural talents he added a considerable share of literary and theological acquirements. His temper constitutionally amiable, notwithstanding a sensitiveness that required the exercise of vigilance, became, from the influence of grace, still more lovely. By the Divine blessing on pastoral instruction and parental care, he early saw the importance, and felt the power of scriptural and evangelical truth. Knowing his obligations to Him who bought him with his blood, and called him out of darkness into marvellous light, his whole soul was devoted to the cause of the Redeemer. In his endeavours to promote the immortal interests of all, and in particular of the young, he displayed an ardent and indefatigable, yet prudent zeal. In the important stations he was called successively to fill as a teacher, a probationer, and a pastor, he acquitted himself with conscientious fidelity. The pursuits of literature, however dear, were not permitted to displace, nor were the public offices of religion, however interesting, allowed to supersede the devotions and self-inquiries of the closet. Though re-

garded by his acquaintance as a most blameless and exemplary person, he strictly scrutinized and deeply lamented his own sins and defects, inwardly aspiring after that glorious perfection which every Christian shall at last attain. He exemplified, in short, in no ordinary degree, those blessed fruits of the Spirit, integrity, humility, candour, and charity.

If any trait of his character remains to be more fully developed, it is the fervent and sanctified attachment he bore for all those to whom he stood related by tender ties. This, however, is a sacred inclosure, on which it is scarcely allowable to enter; yet we can hardly refrain from treading for a moment this delicate ground. No son or brother could well surpass him in filial or fraternal affection. Attached beyond measure to the abode of a parent, he could not enter it without lively emotions of pleasure, nor leave it without feelings of regret. In October 1825, he says, "Cold as have been my religious affections for a considerable time past, I could not but feel grateful to that kind Providence which had allowed me once more to enter in peace the dear dwelling of my mother and sister."—"Immediately after dinner," he says a few days after, "I left with more regret than I could have anticipated, the sweet society of my loving and beloved parent, whom may God shield in his everlasting arms. Mary accompanied me for a mile and a half." That maternal kindness with which he was uniformly treated, he amply repaid by the warmest gratitude. With him, *the law of a mother* was second in authority to the law of God. He stood prepared to obey her counsels and anticipate her

wishes. If in any instance his conscience accused him of slighting her injunctions, or grieving her spirit, he speedily discovered a heartfelt compunction. Actuated alike by a principle of integrity and the power of affection, he gave substantial evidence of a readiness to indemnify her for the expense of the liberal education she cheerfully gave him. On all occasions he rejoiced to contribute to her happiness ; and in particular, after Divine truth had entered deeply into his heart, he was solicitous to administer heavenly consolations to her soul, amid vexing cares or painful recollections. Influenced by this pious solicitude, he tenderly alluded to the death of her husband and his father, in a letter dated January 28, 1826. " Last Sabbath," says he, " would recall mournful thoughts to your recollection. O how sweet to have an undying friend, into whose bosom we need never hesitate to pour our sorrows."

His affection for his sisters was characterised by similar tenderness and piety. Writing to his mother, " Glasgow, August 5, 1829," he says, " My dear mother, it is just eight years since your house became a house of mourning, on account of our dear Magdalene's death. May the more vivid recollection of her, which the return of the melancholy season is calculated to bring with it, have the effect of teaching us more impressively than ever the insufficiency of a world where every thing *passeth away*, and what we most love is often most fragile. But we are Christians, I trust ; and if so, the thought of our own *passing away* ought to be a thought of joy—a *blessed hope* ; for it is the thought of leaving all that is weak, and

variable, and painful, and mingling with all that is stable, and excellent, and happy."

In a subsequent letter, to another correspondent, dated Whithorn, 22d October 1832, after alluding to Magdalene's descending to an early grave, he thus continues—"She was a most sweet and amiable girl. I trust the Saviour had marked her as one of the lambs of his flock, and only removed her then to his better fold above. It is eleven years and more since I laid her cold dust in its kindred earth; but the thoughts of her make me at this moment shed tears as abundant as those which fell upon her grave while it was yet fresh. They are (partly at least) tears of bitter regret that I did not love her better, and imitate her more, while she was with us. Oh! E——, let us cleave to the lively hope which is through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

To his surviving sister, he addressed a great number of affectionate letters, often highly entertaining, but generally replete with animating views and salutary counsel relative to her highest interest. Let one example serve instead of many that might be produced:—

"LETHAM, *January 5, 1829.*

"MY DEAR MARY,—Let our endeavour be to live as seeing Him who is invisible. Let us strive to realize that there is such a great all-seeing, all-powerful, and all-merciful being as the God of the Scriptures, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us frequently think how near the relation is in which we stand to him. We are his offspring, and he is our Father; and (to use the words

of Mr Thomas Erskine) ‘ what a possibility of good or evil, without end, is treasured up in that relation !’ But let us do more than this : we must not be satisfied with *possibility* ; we must ‘ lay hold on eternal life,’ and put the eternally momentous point beyond all question, whether we shall live for ever, or die the second death. Eternal life is in his favour, and his favour is brought near us. ‘ It is in our mouth, and in our heart.’ It is pressing itself on us, and will hardly allow us to exclude it. The favour of God, and of course ‘ all things are ours,’ if we willingly repose our souls on the fact, that God manifest in flesh died for our offences, and rose again for our justification. O were God and his favour felt in their reality by our minds, I am sure our minds would willingly empty themselves of all trifling and transient joys, to make room for a happiness too vast to be fully grasped, even by a heart unfilled and unchained by the things and affections of the world.”

We shall only farther allude to the kindness and respect which, from the date of his arrival in Scotland in his infancy, he uniformly showed to an aunt with whom he then got acquainted, and who, after her father’s death, became an inmate of his mother’s house. To introduce her own testimony regarding him—“ John Henry,” says I—— F——, in a letter to one of her brothers very soon after his death, “ had particularly endeared himself to me, not only by the sweetness of his disposition, Christian cheerfulness, kindness, and personal attentions from his very infancy, but also by his strictly conscientious regard to principle in every part of his conduct since

ever I knew him, and also by his zeal in the cause of his Redeemer since he grew up, and the deep interest he felt in the spiritual welfare of all around him, especially the young. He was ripe for heaven, and it seems the Lord had no more work for him on the earth."

It is not without cause that in this extract his aunt makes mention of his "Christian cheerfulness." Though deeply serious in spirit, and conscientious in deportment, he was by no means gloomy or morose. His temper was characterised by a good deal of native humour and playfulness; and this vivacity, chastened and improved by principle, rendered his company no less pleasant than it was instructive.

In stature, he was a little above the middle size, and the expression of his countenance corresponded with the sweetness of his disposition, the simplicity of his character, and the devotional feelings that were cherished in his breast. The portrait, fronting the title-page of this volume, is taken from a painting in miniature, executed in 1828, and considered a very good likeness. Many who knew his grandfather, the Rev. John Fraser, were very much struck with the close resemblance he bore in his features and general aspect to that honoured relative.

Waiving all minute inquiries regarding the designs of Providence in assigning so very short a career to a young minister so hopeful and interesting, we shall only remark in general, that it becomes us to adore the sovereignty, the rectitude, and the boundless wisdom of that God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This, as we have seen, is

far from being a solitary example of the power of death under similar circumstances. Within these ten years past, the United Secession Church has been called to lament the premature departure of a considerable number of young ministers, distinguished at once for piety and talent; and in the memoirs of some of them that have been given to the world, the reader may find judicious and useful observations respecting the salutary purposes which the early extinction, or rather translation, of these burning and shining lights is calculated to serve.

Amidst these affecting bereavements, it is a never-failing source of consolation to the Church, that her Great Head is alive for evermore, and will never prove wanting to his own cause. "A seed shall serve him;" and whatever may have been the gifts and graces of those whose departure we regret, or whatever the prospects of their future usefulness in this world which are now finally cut off, he is able to provide other pastors after his own heart to succeed them, endowed with equal or superior qualifications for building up the Church.

The United Associate Congregation of Whithorn, after a vacancy which lasted one month longer than the whole period of Mr Gardner's ministry, were blessed with another pastor, namely, the Rev. James Gibson, who was ordained February 11, 1835. May this young man be enabled to copy whatever was most worthy of imitation in the character and conduct of his predecessors, and be spared many years for an eminent blessing to that people!

As to Mr Gardner's *writings*, we may say that

he published no one acknowledged production, and very little in any shape. We know that he composed the Fifth Annual Report of the Highland Missionary Society, (for 1826,) and the short notice of the Rev. Mr Rowatt, formerly mentioned; but we are aware of only one published Essay that was the fruit of his pen, being the first article in the United Secession Magazine for February 1833, pp. 65-71, subscribed G. W. G. It is entitled, "Remarks on certain Quotations from the Old Testament, occurring in the 2d chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews." Though probably too minutely critical for a popular miscellany, it discovers capacity and acuteness, and it closes with a pious wish, worthy of a student of Scripture whose best hopes and joys related to eternity. "We hold interpretation," says he, "to be the handmaid of rational and enlightened devotion; and therefore, though our space will not admit of a lengthened improvement, we cannot close these (perhaps tedious) remarks, without at least expressing our fervent wish that we ourselves, and our readers, may practically experience that relationship to the Redeemer, and that communion with him, (its unvarying and blessed accompaniment,) which will prove to us our best solace against the griefs with which we are acquainted on earth; our best defence in the hour of contest with the last enemy; our best, our unutterable joy, while eternity endures."

The numerous extracts from his correspondence and Diary, which form the substance of this little work, are a kind of *Posthumous* writings. "By these,"

and by the example they exhibit, "he being dead yet speaketh." Miscellaneous and detached though they be, they discover, it is hoped, a good understanding and a feeling heart. Some of them relate to topics of the highest moment; and it is not impossible for that God, who often accomplishes great effects by the feeblest means, to crown them by his blessing with a larger portion of success in promoting the spiritual welfare of the reader, than in many instances he allots to regular and elaborate performances, invested with all the attractions that genius, industry, and art can bestow. "OF HIM, AND THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM, ARE ALL THINGS; TO WHOM BE GLORY FOR EVER. AMEN."

THE END.

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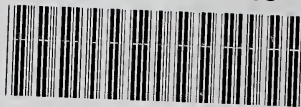
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